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MASSEY, CHARLES EDWARD. A Comparison of Attitudes Regarding the Negro as Pictured in the Raleigh News and Observer in the Years 1905, 1930 and 1955. (1972)  
Directed by: Dr. Richard Bardolph. Pp. 142.

It was the purpose of this study to investigate the changes in attitudes toward the Negro as pictured in the reporting and editorializing of the Raleigh News and Observer at twenty-five year intervals, 1905, 1930 and 1955. General studies of race relations in the United States indicated that changes had taken place during these time spans (1905-1930 and 1930-1955), however, the attitude changes evidenced in the reporting and editorializing of a single newspaper (the Raleigh News and Observer) were not so easily discernable.

A thorough reading of the Raleigh News and Observer during the years 1905, 1930 and 1955 provided a large number of articles regarding Negroes which were catagorized under five main headings: politics, education, crime and punishment, labor, and religion.

In 1905 most Southern whites were convinced that the Negro race was a thousand years behind the white race and many were determined to keep them there. By 1955 the Negro was on the verge of attaining complete equality according to the law. Reason had prevailed in the courts. However, one great barrier remained, a racial prejudice resulting from nearly three-hundred years of concentrated effort to defend the myth of white supremacy: a racial prejudice of which the News and Observer was itself both victim and promoter.

A COMPARISON OF ATTITUDES TOWARD THE NEGRO

AS PICTURED IN THE RALEIGH

NEWS AND OBSERVER

IN THE YEARS

1905, 1930

and 1955

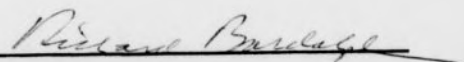
by

Charles E. Massey

A Thesis Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
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of the Requirements for the Degree  
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Approved by

  
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## INTRODUCTION

The surrender of Lee to Grant on April 9, 1865 and of Johnston to Sherman on April 26 of the same year, sealed the North's victory, and four years of bloody civil war in America came abruptly to an end. The victory not only preserved the Union, it also brought both an end to slavery and hope to the South's four million ex-slaves.<sup>1</sup>

The hope grew dim, however, when the expectation of forty acres and a mule failed to materialize. The Black Codes established in the fall and winter of 1865-66 were little more than modified slave codes. Although the overwhelming victory of the Radical Republicans in the November, 1866 elections brought renewed hope which brightened with the establishment of Radical Reconstruction, prospects quickly dimmed as the fires in the hearts of Northern radical crusaders burned lower and lower, and then ceased to burn at all.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>William A. Dunning, Reconstruction, Political and Economic, 1865-1877 (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1907) pp. 4,5; Rayford W. Logan, The Betrayal of the Negro from Rutherford B. Hayes to Woodrow Wilson (London: Collier-Macmillan Ltd., 1965) p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>Benjamin Quarles, The Negro in the Making of America (London: Collier-Macmillan Ltd., 1964) pp. 126-42.

When the federal troops withdrew from the South in 1877, the Negroes found themselves abandoned in a more hostile environment than that which had existed before the war. In the ante-bellum South blacks had few contacts with the bulk of the white population since most of the slaves had been owned by wealthy planters or upper middle-class farmers. With travel for Negroes greatly restricted, they of necessity remained close to the plantations or farms on which they had lived and worked. The freeing of the slaves thrust them suddenly into the competitive economic mainstream and the threatened, suspicious world of poorer Southern whites reacted with extreme sensitivity to this new economic competition.<sup>3</sup>

The early years of "Redemption" were characterized by a difference of opinion among whites as to what the place of the Negro should be in the new order. The upper-class conservatives, feeling no great threat, remained paternalistic as they had been before the war; the lower-class, feeling greatly threatened, frantically opposed the idea of conferring social, political, or economic rights upon the Negro. The blacks, in an attempt to find help

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<sup>3</sup>C. Vann Woodward, The Strange Career of Jim Crow (2nd revised ed., New York: Oxford University Press, 1966) pp. 4-7; Thomas D. Clark and Albert D. Kirwan, The South Since Appomattox, A Century of Regional Change (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967) pp. 305-9; Claude H. Nolen, The Negro's Image in the South: The Anatomy of White Supremacy (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1968) pp. 189-90.

after being forsaken by Northern liberals and radicals, naturally turned to the conservative upper-class Southerners. This alliance was short lived, ending quickly when it afforded a political threat to the whites involved.<sup>4</sup>

During the 1880's and 1890's segregation became a way of life. The caste system which developed separated blacks from whites more rigidly than even slavery had and virtually formed two disparate communities which were allowed to meet only in ways beneficial to the whites. The standard explanation for this system was that it would prevent miscegenation, but economic interests were also a motivating factor.<sup>5</sup>

This total segregation was brought about by the gradual institution of "Jim Crow" laws. In the famous Plessy vs. Ferguson case in 1896 the constitutionality of these laws was argued before the Supreme Court. The Court declared "separate but equal" facilities constitutional and affirmed that the law is "powerless to eradicate racial instincts or to abolish distinctions based upon physical differences". The correction of racial injustices was left to the "long, slow process of education" and "a change in the hearts and minds of men."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Woodward, The Strange Career of Jim Crow, pp. 51-4.

<sup>5</sup>Clark and Kirwan, The South Since Appomattox, pp. 307-9.

<sup>6</sup>Loren Miller, The Petitioners: The Story of the Supreme Court of the United States and the Negro (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1966) pp. 165-86.

The Progressive movement around the turn of the century was for whites only, and in the South the leaders of the movement won control by means of Negro disfranchisement and a white-supremacy movement which coincided with a wave of racism. No longer was it enough to segregate the Negro in schools, churches, housing, jobs, eating establishments, sports events, public transportation, hospitals, orphanages, prisons, funeral homes and cemeteries. An attempt was now made to assure the permanency of the "Jim Crow" system by disqualifying the Negro completely as a political factor.<sup>7</sup> By the year 1905 Southern whites were content that the Negro's "place" had been found, a permanent system established, a final settlement made. Few voiced any disagreement, even in the North. It seemed only reasonable that the biologically inferior Negro should be permanently subordinated to all whites.<sup>8</sup>

Josephus Daniels, who became editor of the Raleigh News and Observer in 1894, was no exception. He was concerned about and worked for the improvement of education, the regulation of trusts, the modernization of agricultural methods, and above all, the promotion of the Democratic party.<sup>9</sup> He served as his state's Democratic Committeeman

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<sup>7</sup> Woodward, The Strange Career of Jim Crow, pp. 90-92.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 7; Clark and Kirwan, The South Since Appomattox, p. 306.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 208.



from 1896 to 1916, as Secretary of the Navy during Wilson's Administration, and as United States Ambassador to Mexico during the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt. By 1898 his News and Observer was the leading Democratic voice in North Carolina and on its way to becoming a quasi-official Democratic organ for the State.<sup>10</sup> In regard to the Negro, however, he was to look back in later years and say, "The paper was cruel in its flagellations. In the perspective of time, I think it was too cruel."<sup>11</sup>

As Joseph L. Morrison states, "The old paternal regard for the Negroes was attested by the family's back porch medical dispensary operated by Miss Addie, who once dealt young Jonathan a severe whipping for referring to a Negro hired man as a 'nigger';"<sup>12</sup> yet Josephus Daniels, Jonathan's father, could write in the News and Observer, in reference to George H. White; "It is bad enough that North Carolina should have the only nigger Congressman."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Joseph L. Morrison, Josephus Daniels Says...An Editor's Political Odyssey from Bryan to Wilson and F. D. R., 1894-1913. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1962) p. viii, 81; Joseph L. Morrison, Josephus Daniels, The Small-d Democrat (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1966) p. 197; Jonathan Daniels, Tar Heels, A Portrait of North Carolina (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1941) p. 330.

<sup>11</sup> Josephus Daniels, Editor in Politics (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1941) p. 145.

<sup>12</sup> Morrison, Small-d Democrat, p. 42.

<sup>13</sup> Congressional Record, 56th Congress, 1st Session, p. 1507.

It was the News and Observer which led the White Supremacy Campaign of 1898 and when its success was assured it was Josephus Daniels who made a special trip to Louisiana to study the methods used by that state to disfranchise the Negroes.<sup>14</sup>

On many occasions the Negro was, for Josephus Daniels, a means to an end. The race issue was the one issue big enough to restore the Democrats to power and he took full advantage of it. Whenever the party was threatened the issue was revived.<sup>15</sup> When Daniels wanted to strike at the Knights of Labor he warned that it was made up of a majority of Negroes led by white Republicans.<sup>16</sup> On other occasions his utterances bore purely racist sentiments. In attacking John C. Dancy's views on education Daniels wrote:

What next? It is not a long step from negro school committeemen having the right to select or dismiss white teachers to negro school examiners to whom ladies must go for examination before they can get certificates to teach in the public schools.<sup>17</sup>

His attitude changed considerably with the passing of years and he openly regretted his paper's bias against

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<sup>14</sup>Morrison, Josephus Daniels Says, pp. 104-114; C. Vann Woodward, Origins of the New South, 1877-1913 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951) pp. 334-35.

<sup>15</sup>Morrison, Josephus Daniels Says, p. 140.

<sup>16</sup>(Raleigh) State Chronicle, February 17, 1888.

<sup>17</sup>(Raleigh) News and Observer, October 26, 1898. John C. Dancy was the Negro Collector of Customs at Wilmington who wrote widely on educational matters.

blacks in reporting and editorializing. "Whenever there was any gross crime on the part of the Negroes", he later wrote, "the News and Observer printed it in a lurid way, sometimes too lurid, in keeping with the spirit of the times...." He confessed himself "amazed at his own editorial violence at times, even when he understood the circumstances which surrounded it...."<sup>18</sup> By the early 1940's Daniels was considered a leading friendly white Southerner and was greatly sought after as a speaker in Negro churches and colleges, but he never overcame his phobia against "social intermingling" and he felt his son, Jonathan, to be "too advanced in his racial attitudes."<sup>19</sup>

At the turn of the century Josephus Daniels had helped North Carolinians settle the "Negro question" and put Negroes in their "place". Nearly half a century later after discussing the "Negro question" for at least two hours with radio news commentator Cedric Foster, Daniels concluded: "The answer, sir, is simple. There is no solution, Cedric. There is no solution."<sup>20</sup>

Jonathan, Josephus Daniels' third son who edited the News and Observer during his father's years in Mexico and who himself served as Press Secretary to Franklin D. Roosevelt

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<sup>18</sup> Josephus Daniels, Editor in Politics, pp. 253, 623.

<sup>19</sup> Morrison, Small-d Democrat, pp. 241, 269, 242.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 242.



during the last month of Roosevelt's life, assumed full responsibilities as editor after his father's death in January, 1948.<sup>21</sup> His racial attitudes marked a great advance upon those of his father. He showed little sympathy for the old arguments of the White Supremacists regarding Negroes during Reconstruction. "I happen to be a Democrat and a Southerner", he said, "who thinks the whole story of Reconstruction in the South and particularly the story of the freed Negroes after the war needs to be rewritten with a good deal less old-time Democratic politics and prejudice in it."<sup>22</sup> After studying the homicide statistics in regard to Negroes in the United States he concluded: "The American Negro is a killer certainly, if the statistics mean anything. But it was the Southern white man, adding the attitudes of the frontier to aristocratic notions about honor, who built the tradition of violence. His mobs have helped maintain it."<sup>23</sup>

Whereas his father had had no solution to the "Negro question" Jonathan did not even pretend to understand the question. He could only say: "There are economic aspects

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 244-45; Josephus Daniels, Shirt-Sleeve Diplomat (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947) p. 506.

<sup>22</sup>Jonathan Daniels, Tar Heels, p. 125.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 200.

in the matter undoubtedly, and economics are involved in emotions, but the emotions of race relations are more complex even than economics. I am one Southerner who does not even pretend to understand."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

## POLITICS

## 1905 - Negro Disfranchisement

Disfranchisement of the Negro was accomplished in North Carolina by 1900.<sup>1</sup> The issue was still discussed in 1905, however, especially regarding the attitude of Northerners. On April 16, extracts from Hamilton Wright Mabie's "The New North", which was published in the April edition of the South Atlantic Quarterly, were carried in the News and Observer. Mr. Mabie spoke words of praise for the change in Northern attitudes toward the treatment of Negroes in the South. The "New North" recognized that only Southerners could understand and solve their race problems, and what they needed was patient understanding and not criticism. In speaking of the Negro franchise, or lack of it, he said:

The New North does not believe that the door of citizenship should be closed in any man's face because of race or color; but it also believes that all the conditions of citizenship, save this, belong to the States for settlement; that the South should decide for itself the conditions precedent to the granting of the franchise; that the South understands, as the North does not and cannot, the

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<sup>1</sup>Woodward, The Strange Career of Jim Crow, p. 84.

actual conditions under which this problem must be worked out; and that what the South needs from the North is the patience which is born of knowledge, the sympathy which comes from an old and common responsibility, and the cooperation which is the fruit of faith.<sup>2</sup>

In May the News and Observer reported the death of Albion Tourgee (a Reconstruction judge who had come to the state from Ohio) in a remarkably kind way, speaking often of the good qualities of the man. The fact, however, that "he had . . . come in good faith," and "toiled in good faith," was over-shadowed by "his blind adhesion to the negro suffrage idea." He had tried to make an Ohio of North Carolina and this had been a foolish mistake.<sup>3</sup>

The South insisted that it be left alone to work out its own solutions to its problems, but when the Negro right to vote became a major issue in the Maryland election of 1905, Southerners were quick to offer advice. The campaign platform of the Maryland Democrats announced that: "The negro vote as it stands today is a perpetual menace to the prosperity and peace of Maryland--a menace to our very civilization, for it is ignorant, corrupt, the blind instrument of unscrupulous and selfish leaders."<sup>4</sup> In October,

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<sup>2</sup>(Raleigh) News and Observer, April 16, 1905, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. May 28, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. September 28, 1905, p. 1.

Charles B. Aycock spoke in Baltimore in support of a proposed amendment to disfranchise Maryland Negroes.

The News and Observer, in reporting the speech, stated:

In humorously referring to the fact that the negro is so completely out of politics in North Carolina that it is no longer necessary to discuss him, the ex-Governor said: 'Why, it has gotten so now that I am out of training when it comes to making a nigger speech. When I was in training I could make a nigger speech that would raise your hair. I know how it is.....

.....  
'Don't you believe that you can and should make a distinction between the white man and the negro? God made one and his mark is legible. (Applause.)'<sup>5</sup>

On November 8, the defeat of the proposed amendment was reported on page one.

In Virginia an incident occurred which reflected the solidarity of white opinion regarding the Negro in politics. On November 5, the News and Observer reported the formation of an "Independent Negro Party" in Virginia and concluded that it meant "the Practical Elimination of the Black Vote for Republicans." The article also avers that the white leaders were "glad to get rid of the element represented in the new party, this element having always been an incubus on the party as a whole." Efforts were being made to build up an all-white Republican party in the State.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid. October 26, 1905, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid. November 5, 1905, p. 10.

Negro disfranchisement was viewed by most Southern whites as a positive good, not only for them but for the Negro also. They thought blacks incapable of intelligent political action and a dangerous temptation to white politicians.<sup>7</sup> This opinion was so well accepted in North Carolina that it was no longer newsworthy except as it related to the other states and as it was accepted in the North.

#### 1930 - A Growing Threat

By 1930 the Negro was a factor to be reckoned with in national politics, and failure to do so sometimes brought disaster. In January the News and Observer reported "growing unrest in Negro ranks" due to the "failure of Hoover to give political plums to Negroes." In commenting on the situation the News and Observer stated:

This is one of the most troublesome problems of the Hoover administration. It is damned if it does and damned if it doesn't give Negroes recognition. If it recognizes Negroes in the South, then it is goodbye to ambitions for party prestige in that section, and if it doesn't then it may suffer serious losses of votes in several Northern States.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>I. A. Newby, Jim Crow's Defense: Anti-Negro Thought in America, 1900-1930 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), p. 151.

<sup>8</sup>(Raleigh) News and Observer, January 6, 1930, p. 8.



In March of 1930 the Hoover administration was made keenly aware of just how troublesome the "Negro problem" really was. President Hoover nominated Judge John J. Parker, a North Carolina Republican, to the United States Supreme Court - an action which obviously would have strengthened the Republican party in North Carolina. On March 30 the following article appeared on page two of the News and Observer:

Charging that Judge John J. Parker, of North Carolina, had made statements they construed as reflecting on the Negro race, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People today announced it had appealed to Chairman Norris of the Senate judiciary committee, for adverse action on Parker's nomination to the United States Supreme Court.

In letters to Norris and 34 other Senators, the association asked permission to appear before the committee in its hearings on Judge Parker's nomination by President Hoover.

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The letters quote the Greensboro, (N. C.) Daily News' account of a speech made by Judge Parker in 1920, when he was a candidate for governor: 'The participation of the Negro in politics is a source of evil and danger to both races and is not desired by the wise men in either race or by the Republican party of North Carolina.'

During the month of April the following front page article heads appeared:

Bitter Negro Attack on Parker Scares Senators  
Shepard Only Negro Leader to Favor North  
Carolinian For Supreme Court

OVERMAN SAYS NEGROES VOTED FOR  
J. J. PARKER

.....  
Washington, April 11.-

FEAR PARKER NOW FACING DANGER  
OF DEFEAT IN SENATE  
American Federation of Labor and National  
Negro Association Lined Up Against Him;  
Tar Heel Negro Leaders For Him; Report  
Expected on Monday  
Washington, April 12.-

WANT PARKER NOMINATION CARRIED  
OVER TO DECEMBER  
Negro Question Causing Increasing  
Nervousness in Republican Ranks  
Washington, April 16.-

DISTRESSED REPUBLICANS WANT  
PARKER TO APPEAR FOR SENATE  
EXAMINATION  
. . . Publisher Jeffress, of Greensboro,  
Complains that 'Distorted Reports of What  
The Daily News Printed Are Being  
Circulated As Part of Propaganda Against  
Judge Parker, Inspired Perhaps By Communists  
Working Thro' Negro Organizations'; More  
Endorsements and Protests Received  
News and Observer Bureau  
1160 National Press Bldg.  
By JOHN A. LIVINGSTONE  
Washington, April 18.-

JUDGE PARKER'S CHANCES OF  
CONFIRMATION DIMMED BY  
ACTION OF COMMITTEE  
. . . Influence of Negro Protest Primary  
Factor in Adverse Vote, . . . Senators  
From Border and Northern States Where  
Negro Vote Is a Considerable Factor  
Feared Political Consequences of En-  
dorsing Tar Heel For Highest Tribunal . . .  
News and Observer Bureau  
1160 National Press Bldg.  
By JOHN A. LIVINGSTONE  
Washington, April 21.-<sup>9</sup>

Editorially the News and Observer attacked Parker and  
the Republicans.

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid. April 12, 13, 17, 19, 22, 1930, p. 1.



The Republicans, continuing their appeal to the Negroes as usual, found one more Negro yesterday to endorse Parker, and others who attempt to speak for Negroes. It is to laugh to see them appealing on one hand to Southern Democrats to support Parker, alleging he favors the grandfather clause, and on the other paramounting Negro support on the ground that Parker was just playing politics in his Greensboro speech. Both ends against the middle!<sup>10</sup>

The News and Observer thinks Judge Parker is like all other leading North Carolina Republicans. When the Negro voters could elect them to office, the Negro was coddled and petted and given public office, even directing schools attended by white children. When the suffrage amendment removed the illiterate Negroes from voting, and they could no longer elect white Republicans to office, the said white Republicans ungratefully turned from them in public, told them they were not 'fitten' and gave them kicks instead of cajolery.<sup>11</sup>

However, some North Carolina Democrats saw a grave danger resulting from Parker's possible defeat. Senator Overman was quoted by the New York Times as saying: "If Judge Parker is rejected, Southern Negroes will accept it as due to their protests and may become unruly."<sup>12</sup>

On May 7, 1930, the United States Senate rejected Judge Parker as Supreme Court Justice. On May 8 Representative Charles A. Jonas, Republican national committeeman from North Carolina, was quoted on page one of the News and Observer as saying that

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid. April 27, 1930, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid. May 3, 1930, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid. April 28, 1930, p. 4.

The fight on Judge Parker was one of the most cruel, civious and clandestine ever waged against any man. The Communists, Reds, those whom Senator Moses termed the 'Sons of the Wild Jackass,' the Negro, Josephus Daniels and his News and Observer composed the unholy alliance that waged this fight for his defeat and the insult of the entire South.

The News and Observer hardly played as significant a part in the defeat of Parker as Jonas gives it credit for.

The storm over the rejection of Judge Parker had hardly subsided before a greater tempest broke in North Carolina. On May 27, 1930, a front page article head read: "Many Raleigh Negroes On Books as Democrats." In three precincts 375 Negroes had registered as Democrats and only 85 as Republicans. In an editorial the same day the News and Observer stated:

The report that something like four hundred Negroes, 243 in the sixteenth precinct, have been allowed to register as Democrats in Raleigh calls for investigation and action. There are no Negro Democrats in Raleigh and those responsible for registering them are placing a dagger at the heart of the Democratic party. . . . The Negro belongs in the Republican primary. The best ones of that race will not seek admission to the primary of a party to which they do not belong, and which will not accept them, and the others should not be permitted to do so. . . . They should not be allowed to vote in the selection of Democratic candidates.

The fact that Democrats had controlled the State since the turn of the century, without serious threat from the Republicans, made no difference.

Bart M. Gatling, Wake County campaign manager for Senator Simmons, whose chief opponent in the upcoming primary was Josiah W. Bailey, issued the following statement:

The registration as Democrats of several hundred Negro voters in the city of Raleigh, and particularly in one ward, by the supporters of Mr. Bailey, is an outrage on the party that in my judgment will arouse the deep indignation of the democrats throughout the State, and particularly of the surviving members of that gallant organization which, underchairman Simmons in 1898 and 1900 redeemed the State from the Negroes and the Fusionists, established White Supremacy and declared the Democratic party for all time the white peoples' party of this State.<sup>13</sup>

Bailey denied the charges made by Gatling and called upon his supporters to bar all Republicans, white or black, from the Democratic primary.<sup>14</sup> And Bailey's supporters struck back at Simmons. The following letter to the editor of the News and Observer appeared on June 3:

Why should not the Negro be allowed to vote as he sees fit? The Negro is a free citizen of the United States. Mr. Simmons was very glad to see the Negro vote against Alfred E. Smith and was glad to see many of our white Democrats do the same. The Negroes may not be Democrats, as Mr. Gatling says, but still many of our white Democrats went against their party in the last presidential campaign. A fine and loyal Democrat Senator Simmons turned out to be in the last campaign for President! I do not see how he can expect anyone to follow in his footsteps and back the Democratic party. The Democratic rule does not fail to tell the Negro

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid. May 29, 1930, p. 5.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid. May 30, 1930, p. 10.

when to pay his taxes. Mark my word, if Mr. Bailey wins, the cry for the next five years from the Simmons followers will be the fact that the Negroes elected him.

The majority of the Negroes who registered as Democrats were challenged in court. Many did not appear, but most of those who did were passed.<sup>15</sup> Editorially the News and Observer continued to attack Negro registration and warned of a possible black "balance of power".<sup>16</sup> However, Democratic white supremacists realized that legally their hands were tied when on June 13, 1930, the United States Circuit Court of Appeals declared unconstitutional the Virginia Democratic party's rule limiting the right to participate in its primaries to white persons.<sup>17</sup>

On November 21, 1930, Dr. James Weldon Johnson, executive secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, spoke at Founders' Day exercises at Shaw University. The News and Observer reported that Johnson "advised Southern Negroes to participate in the Democratic primaries at least temporarily, for the purpose of nominating and electing local officers in sympathy with their race and its problems."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid. June 1, 4, 5, 6, 1930, p. 1; June 6, 1930, p. 8.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid. June 4, 6, 1930, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid. June 14, 1930, p. 13.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid. November 22, 1930, p. 4.

In July statements by Senator Blease of South Carolina, who was seeking re-election, forced the News and Observer, for the sake of principle, to involve itself in South Carolina's Democratic primary. Speaking editorially it said:

In an address, asking re-election to the Senate, in Union, S. C., on Monday, Senator Blease is quoted by the reliable Associated Press as advocating lynch law for rapists and saying that 'whenever the Constitution comes between me and the virtue [sic] of the white woman of South Carolina, I say "to hell with the Constitution."

He added:

When I was Governor of South Carolina you did not hear of me calling out the militia of the State to protect Negro rapists.

In my South Carolina campaign you heard me say, 'When you catch the brute that assaults a white woman, wait until the next morning to notify me.'

We don't stand on technicalities when that crime is committed. We simply take the law in our own hands and carry out the penalty imposed by law.

Any man in public life who gives utterance to such statements as above shows that he is due for repudiation by his people and to retirement from public position. There should be no place in public life for any man who says, 'To hell with the constitution' or practices that doctrine of anarchy or incites mobs to take the execution of law into their own hands.<sup>19</sup>

Three days later another editorial stated:

If South Carolina should demean itself by re-electing Blease, the world would

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid. July 9, 1930, p. 4.



accept it as a vote to endorse lynching. People who love the fair name of the Palmetto State should bestir themselves to defeat Blease.<sup>20</sup>

The News and Observer adhered to political discrimination against Negroes but abhorred the brand of racism which advocated mob murder.

#### 1955 - One Issue

In the South in 1955 integration was the political issue. The intensity of feelings over it was evidenced when the following was reported on the front page of the News and Observer:

Rep. Cleveland M. Bailey. . . . West Virginia Democrat, and Rep. Adam Clayton Powell. . . also a Democrat and pastor of New York City's largest Negro church, were reported to have engaged in a fist fight during a closed meeting of the House Education and Labor Committee yesterday. The reported fight took place during debate on whether an antisegregation amendment should be tacked onto a school aid bill.<sup>21</sup>

Opinions as to the outcome of the 1954 Supreme Court ruling on public school segregation were varied. Said David Brinkley, speaking on NBC's "Comment"

My own opinion is this; for some years the Southern States will evade and resist the court's ruling, and successfully. Then, gradually and quietly, a county here and a county there will make the change. And

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid. July 12, 1930, p. 4.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid. July 21, 1955, p. 1.

finally, when the Southern states have proved to the satisfaction of themselves and others that they are not being forced into it, they then will send their white and Negro children to school together.<sup>22</sup>

Senators John Stennis, of Mississippi, and Sam Ervin, of North Carolina, reportedly saw "voluntary segregation" as the "perfect answer" to the problem.<sup>23</sup> A Mr. Nixon, of Sanford, had the following to say in a letter to the editor of the News and Observer:

I have formed the opinion to my satisfaction that it [integration] will never work satisfactorily. First when you put the two races together some will cross breed and produce a mixed race and the natural minds of the two races are so different that both races will be degraded and that will be the downfall of our nation completely.

Second a mixed person does not have the proper love or respect for either race. They are sex crazy to a certain degree and are more dangerous than a true breed of either race. There is far too many mulattoes in the South already to the regret of all respectful citizens. But what is already done can't be helped, but if we make it worse then we are to blame.<sup>24</sup>

Similarly, it was reported on page one of the July 19, 1955, News and Observer that Governor Luther H. Hodges, of North Carolina, did not believe that mass integration was coming. In March the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People had, however, called on Hodges to "help abolish all racial segregation laws in

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid. May 6, 1955, p. 4.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid. November 15, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid. April 21, 1955, p. 4.

North Carolina." The News and Observer reported that "among the bills suggested was one which would repeal the act forbidding marriage between white persons and Negroes."<sup>25</sup>

The NAACP got no support from Hodges, but in November the News and Observer reported two decisions handed down in Washington favoring its appeals. On November 7 the Supreme Court ordered segregation ended in parks, playgrounds, and golf courses; and on November 25 the Interstate Commerce Commission ruled segregation in train and bus travel unlawful.<sup>26</sup>

The attitude of the News and Observer toward the NAACP was thinly veiled in the following editorial which appeared four days after the death of Walter White, the executive secretary of the NAACP, who was to most Southerners the personification of the organization which he headed:

#### Giving Him His Due

There will be many Southerners, deeply stirred about serious problems in race relations, who will feel no sense of loss over the news that Walter White, longtime head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, is dead. White represented to them all the angers and fears which they believe his work

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid. March 6, 1955, p. 10.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid. November 8, 26, 1955, p. 1.



produced. The very dimensions of the feeling against him, however, is the best evidence of his effectiveness in the cause for which he fought.

White was by profession a zealot and an agitator. He seemed to many Southerners not only to threaten the security of long established Southern traditions. Many of them also thought that he did disservice to his own race by jeopardizing, as they believed, good relations between white men and colored men in America. Undoubtedly he was careless of such criticism. Undoubtedly also he made mistakes in his career devoted frankly to the advance of his people regardless of all else. His worse sic enemies, however, are the best witnesses that what he fought for he fought for effectively, wholeheartedly and continually. Even those who believe he had a bad cause can hardly question that he was a good fighter. The best evidence of that is the dismay of his enemies at what seemed to them to be the disastrous proportions of his success in overturning laws which supported habits and customs.

Those who believe in giving the devil his due will not deny Walter White the credit for things for which they blamed him most vociferously while he lived.<sup>27</sup>

More alarming to many North Carolina segregationists than the 1954 Supreme Court public school decision was the fact that thirteen Negro candidates were entered in contests in the May, 1955, General Election; the largest number in the history of the State of North Carolina. Three were, in fact, elected to office.<sup>28</sup>

There was one incident reported in the News and Observer in 1955 in which racist action was changed because of public demand. Georgia Tech's football team was

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid. March 26, 1955, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid. May 5, 1955, p. 27.

selected to play the University of Pittsburgh in the Sugar Bowl on New Year's Day, 1956. Governor Griffin, of Georgia, took action to prevent Georgia Tech from playing because one of Pittsburgh's reserve backs was a Negro. The outcry from Georgia Tech supporters was so great that Governor Griffin was forced to capitulate. In editorializing on the Governor's actions the News and Observer stated: ". . . there are limits in the South to political appeals to racial hysteria."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid. December 4-6, 1955, pp. 1,4.

## EDUCATION

## 1905 - Negro Education

In 1905 the News and Observer presented differing opinions regarding the education of Negroes in North Carolina and the South. Josephus Daniels editorially supported Negro progress in education<sup>1</sup>, but many Southerners were opposed to the educating of Negroes, and their opinions were vociferously voiced.

On April 29 and 30, the News and Observer carried a speech made by Governor Glenn at A. and M.<sup>2</sup> College in Greensboro, in which he gave three reasons why Negro education was opposed:

First, because they do not save and accumulate anything, but waste everything and therefore do not bear their proportionate part of the taxes incident to education. Second, that when they acquire a little learning, they feel fit to be lawyers, doctors and will not work with their hands, becoming unfit citizens and vagrants and winding up in the penitentiary. Third, because when once they have received their education, they do not show their gratitude by remaining in the State and giving their services here, but leave the State and do nothing toward helping those who have helped them.

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<sup>1</sup>Morrison, Josephus Daniels Says, p. 142.

<sup>2</sup>Later renamed North Carolina A. and T. College.

A number of articles either stated or implied that education was wasted on the naturally inferior Negro.

B. C. Malebisse wrote that

. . . no amount of the white man's 'higher education' is potent enough to eradicate the belief of the negro, in dark sorceriel, [sic] inherited, like his color and flavor, from savage ancestors, whose witch-doctors conjured with creeping things, and who bowed down before fetiches of wood and stone in demon worship, in African jungles, before the first dynasty of the Pharoahs of Egypt. As well hope to change his skin from black to white by propinquity, or his tribal tendencies by law, as try to alter his savage-bred instincts by a 'higher education', a thousand years in advance of his capacities. 'Half devil and half child,' he must be handled (educated) accordingly.<sup>3</sup>

In reporting the story of an 18 year-old Negro who had eaten poison "Rat-Bis-Kits" the following comment was made: "The package containing the 'rat-bis-kit' was very plainly marked, and anybody could easily have learned by both the statement on the cover and the skull and cross bones that the contents were poison and the negro was said to be able to read well."<sup>4</sup> The inuendoes were subtly clothed in humor in an article headed "CORNFIELD NIGGERS AND DOG" which told the following colorful story:

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<sup>3</sup>(Raleigh) News and Observer, October 29, 1905, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., November 4, 1905, p. 2.

. . . it seems that at a public school commencement, at which numerous Sambas [sic] and Josephines and Marthas were to deliver orations and recite the proclamation of emancipation et cetera, while the orchestra was to do 'Dixie' with the accompaniment of John Brown's body and Booker T. Johnsing was to recite 'Give me liberty or give me death,' there were two cornfield darkies, John and Peter Rogers, on the outside of the school house, drawn perhaps by the crowd, but afraid to venture so near to learning. Also there was a yaller cur nosing about for food, and the combination naturally made trouble. To pass the time, one of the corn-field coons shied a playful [sic] rock at the cur, who yelped and departed post-haste. The flight aroused the negroes from their lethargy so that they made certain ungodly and indecent sounds of delight, meanwhile hurling missels [sic] at the departing canine. One of the rocks, missing its prey by a hair's breadth, struck the school house a whack that resounded, and that, with the yelps of the dog, the shouts of his pursuers and the thump of the rock, the congregation arose enmasse to join the fray and the Emancipation Proclamation was totally lost in the shuffle.

Whereupon S. T. Rogers, who runs the school, and his woman assistants, swore out warrants against the illiterate of their<sup>5</sup> race who preferred dogs to literature. . . .

The most serious opponents of Negro education were those who feared that through education the Negro might be able to rise from his position of subordination to rival the whites. In an article reprinted from the Journal, Mr. Roland F. Beasley, superintendent of public schools in Union County, attempted to quiet just such a fear in his County. He wrote:

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., June 24, 1905, p. 2.

It is said by some that the negroes go to school better than the white children, and some timid souls are afraid that the darkies will carry off all the learning. There are two colored schools in Vance township. The census shows 175 colored children of school age. On the visitations of the County Superintendent he found in the two schools just 30 children, which is about 17 per cent. of the census. At the same time there were 50 per cent. of the white children of this township in attendance. Not much danger in that, is there? The danger lies in the 83 per cent. who were in the woods.<sup>6</sup>

This fear, however, was too great to be easily quieted. It was, in fact, so great that it brought an attack against Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee Institute. Washington's name appeared several times in the News and Observer in 1905 in a noncommittal way. But, on Sunday, August 26, the headlines on page one read: "DANGERS LURK IN TUSKEGEE'S WORK." The article head went on to state: "Booker Washington is Preparing Silently the Way for Amalgamation or for a Nation Within A Nation." The article was a review of a book by Thomas Dixon, Jr. in which he claimed that "the negro educator is not training students to take their place in any industrial system of the South in which the white man can direct and control him. He is training them all to be masters of men." Beside the review of Dixon's book was a review of a book by H. A. Latham, the head of which read:

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., December 14, 1905, p. 4.



UNCLE BARNEY OF THE OLD REGIME  
Humble, Faithful, Loving 'His White Folks'  
With Dog-Like Devotion, and Tenderly loved  
by them in Return.

A TYPE FAST FADING  
The Story of Barney's Life is an Idyl, and  
His Tender Nursing Through Her Last Illness  
of the Sole Surviving Daughter of the Proud  
Family of His Ante-Bellum 'Missus' Forms Per-  
haps Its Most Sacredly Beautiful Chapter.

#### 1930 - Separate and Unequal

By 1930 the educating of Negroes was generally  
accepted and advised. The following quotation from the  
Cleveland Star appeared in the News and Observer under  
the heading "SCHOOLS AND CRIME":

'It would be considerably cheaper,' is the  
deduction of the recorder, 'to educate all  
of the county children, white and black,  
than to send a big percentage of the unedu-  
cated to jail and the chain gang. And un-  
doubtedly, it would be much better for  
them.'<sup>7</sup>

On February 8, 1930, Miss Clara Cox, of High Point,  
North Carolina, spoke to the students and faculty of  
Guilford College on "the Negro question in this State  
today." The next day the News and Observer reported her  
talk as follows:

According to Miss Cox, there are five  
points of view in the United States as to  
the treatment of the Negro question, viz.,  
North, South, East, West and North Carolina.  
North Carolina, she stated has a unique way  
of her own of treating this question, and

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., March 7, 1930, p. 4.

many advantages for the colored people have developed in the last few years. At present there are five colleges for Negroes in the State - two normal schools and three regular four-year colleges. In addition, there are many grade and high schools throughout the state.

Miss Cox pointed out that as a result in this advancement in education for the colored race, they are making rapid strides to the front in poetry, art, etc. In the last few years there has also been a very rapid increase in the development of business enterprises owned and operated by colored people. In addition to this, there has been a steady decrease in crime, and the colored people are fast becoming some of the best North Carolina citizens.

Governor O. Max Gardner in addressing the graduating class of Winston-Salem Teachers College on June 3, 1930, spoke of the Negro's "great work of training his people to the fullest use and development of their native cultural and economic capacities." He said that one means Negroes had of proving their "capacity for good citizenship" was "by taking the fullest advantage of the educational opportunities offered him."<sup>8</sup>

The value of Negro school property was worth twenty times as much in 1930 as in 1904 and school enrollment was nearly doubled.<sup>9</sup> But, of the total Negro enrollment of the public elementary schools in North Carolina, nearly forty percent was in the first grade and two-thirds of the enrollment was in the first three grades.<sup>10</sup> On March 4 the

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., June 4, 1930, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., July 27, 1930, p. 7.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., February 3, 1930, p. 6.



following article head appeared in the News and Observer:  
 "MOST N. C. NEGROES IN SHORT TERM SCHOOLS". The article  
 stated that only "35 per cent get eight months instruction."  
 The report of the opening of schools in Mecklenburg ex-  
 plained how the "short term" worked in that County.

An estimated 4,000 Negro children. . . will  
 answer the school bell tomorrow morning at  
 42 rural schools and will begin their class  
 work under the direction of 93 teachers,  
 according to County Superintendent of Schools  
 Frank A. Edmondson.

The Negro schools will operate for a six  
 months term, with two months running from July  
 21 to September 15, following which will be a  
 two-months recess for cotton picking, and the  
 remaining four months following December.

The school day for the Negro children will  
 begin bright and early with classes taking up  
 at 7:45 o'clock in the morning and ending at  
 2:30 o'clock in the afternoon. This early  
 start allows the children to get in a day's  
 work at school and still assist their families  
 with the late summer farm work.<sup>11</sup>

Had it not been for the philanthropic spirit of  
 Julius Rosenwald and other wealthy Northerners, conditions  
 would have been much worse.<sup>12</sup> The extensiveness of  
 Rosenwald's aid to Negro public education was acknowledged  
 by a News and Observer article datelined "Tarboro, March 11."

The colored schools of the county recently paid  
 tributes to Julius Rosenwald, who had contri-  
 buted materially to the support of these schools.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., July 21, 1930, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> Lance G. E. Jones, Negro Schools in the Southern  
 States (London: Oxford University Press, 1928) pp. 117-19.

There are twenty-four of the schools in this county that have received contributions from the Rosenwald fund. Appropriate exercises were held in honor of the benefactor.<sup>13</sup>

On April 7, "Clark Foreman and H. M. Bond, representatives of the Rosenwald School Fund for colored people," arrived in Tarboro to inspect the schools and test the children "in order to ascertain the progress that has been made by the schools."<sup>14</sup>

Yet, even Northern organizations concerned with the education of Negroes in the South were not always convinced that Negroes were capable of operating their own schools, especially on the college level. On July 17, 1930 the following article head appeared on page one of the News and Observer:

Failure Seen for Move For Negro Head at Shaw. Northern Baptist Board Expected to Accept President Peacock's Resignation Today and Name Another White Man to Head Local Negro University.

In January of the same year the News and Observer had reported a student strike at Shaw which resulted from the University's being barred from membership in the Colored Inter-collegiate Athletic Association. The protest was aimed at Dr. J. L. Peacock, white president,

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<sup>13</sup>(Raleigh) News and Observer, March 12, 1930, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., April 8, 1930, p. 20.

who was accused, along with other members of the administration, of breaking football contracts with other Negro schools. Dr. Peacock claimed that "the state of athletic finances made it advisable."<sup>15</sup> The strike ended the next day when the administration agreed to consider student grievances.<sup>16</sup> However, Dr. Peacock resigned at the end of the school term.

In speculating on the reaction of the Home Missions Board of the Northern Baptist Convention to the resignation of Dr. Peacock the News and Observer declared:

Despite a movement among some alumni, that has been given prominence of late, for a Negro president, it is known that the board would be reluctant to turn over the presidency to a Negro in view of the fact that the institution derives its support almost wholly from Northern white Baptists through their Home Missions activity.<sup>17</sup>

Although education for blacks was accepted, it was assumed that this should be education of a special kind. After all, Negroes' abilities were limited, as J. P. Alley indicated in his "HAMBONE'S MEDITATIONS," a regular feature of the 1930 News and Observer. On September 17 Alley's Hambone said: "TOM'S BOY WHUT'S A DOCTUH, HE GOT

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., January 14, 1930, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., January 15, 1930, p. 16.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., July 17, 1930, p. 1.

'M. D.' ATTER HE NAME--I RECK'N DAT SIGNIFY 'MIGHTY DOUBTFUL' ! ! ! " Even more convincing was the headline which appeared on page one of the January 15 News and Observer: "NEGRO DISMISSED AS CADET FOR HIS FAILURE IN CLASS." The article head went on to state: "Alonzo Parham, Lone Negro at West Point, Gets Honorable Discharge." The article spoke in detail of Parham's appointment by Oscar DePriest, the first Northern Negro elected to the national House of Representatives;<sup>18</sup> his dismissal "due to failure in the mathematics examination"; and DePriest's insistence that he would continue to appoint Negroes. Only brief mention was made of the sixty-three white cadets who were also discharged.

The special kind of education for Negroes that Southern whites were willing to accept was agricultural education which not only prepared the intellectually deficient blacks for their "place" in society but, also, at times, provided other welcomed rewards, such as the following, reported by the News and Observer:

#### NEGRO FARM TEACHING RETURNS DIVIDENDS

Two dollars and twenty-one cents is returned in pupil income for every dollar spent in teachers' salaries in Negro Schools of North Carolina offering courses in supervised farm practice, the report of H. O. Sargent, Federal Agent for Agricultural education which was made public yesterday by the State Department of Education, revealed.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> John Hope Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom, A History of Negro Americans (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1967) p. 525.

<sup>19</sup> (Raleigh) News and Observer, April 22, 1930, p. 18.

## 1955 - Separate or Nothing!

1955 found North Carolina and the whole South in the midst of the greatest crisis it had faced since the end of Radical Reconstruction. On May 17, 1954, in reading the Supreme Court decision in the case of Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Chief Justice Earl Warren announced: "We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place."<sup>20</sup>

The reaction to this decision was immediate and hostile; the doctrine was construed as a direct attack on the Southern way of life. The News and Observer reported that Southern educators reacted to the Court decision much the same as the general public: considering school integration to be a step toward total integration and opposing it bitterly. They feared that Reds had infiltrated the NAACP and the Supreme Court.<sup>21</sup>

Locally, in many areas, the decision of the Court was ignored. Pamlico County proceeded with a school program of "seperate, equal facilities" since two new centrally located schools had recently been constructed.<sup>22</sup> On February 27, 1955, the News and Observer reported that

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<sup>20</sup>Miller, The Petitioners, p. 347.

<sup>21</sup>(Raleigh) News and Observer, January 16, 1955, p. 10.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., January 9, 1955, p. 3.



Despite the U. S. Supreme Court decision of May 17, 1954 banning racial segregation in public schools, Moore County is continuing with its longterm \$800,000 school building program designed to give Negro citizens 'separate but equal school facilities.'

The following article, which appeared on the editorial page of the March 28, 1955 News and Observer contained a surprisingly candid appraisal of the school issue:

Pointing out some of the implications of the U. S. Supreme Court decision banning segregation in public schools, Tennessee's school superintendent Dr. Quill E. Cope recently declared bluntly that the decision has brought to our immediate attention on [sic] issue that has been facing the South for many years - an issue which all informed Southerners have realized that eventually we were going to have to face.'

'Regardless of one's views on the decision,' asserted Dr. Cope, 'I think you will agree that it illustrates what so often happens when educators and leaders fail to do what they know they should do . . . . Few Southerners who are completely honest will argue that the South has made a sincere effort to provide equal educational facilities until recent years . . . . In other words, our sins of the past 50 to 60 years in not providing equal educational facilities have undoubtedly brought into focus the many forces that resulted in the decision of May 18, 1954.'

In brief, Dr. Cope's interesting thesis is that the South by its own negligence has brought the present situation on itself and that it is now a necessity for the South to accept the decision either gracefully and with good will or in time forcibly and inevitably. Strong medicine for a proud and reluctant people - and blunt, hard talking from one of its most eminent educators.

The South was in no mood to accept the decision "gracefully and with good will." In North Carolina it



was proposed that local school boards be given authority over enrollment and that appeals to the State Board of Education be discontinued. According to C. R. Holoman, school budget analyst for the Budget Bureau, "This would mean that a single court decision would not affect all of North Carolina. Thus integration . . . could be staved off."<sup>23</sup> In reporting on the petitions that poured in to the Legislature the News and Observer stated that the "burden of all the petitions was that integration will lead to the amalgamation of the races and that segregation should be maintained."<sup>24</sup> On March 30 it reported on page one that the General Assembly had passed a bill, backed by Governor Luther Hodges, giving "local school boards the sole right . . . of assigning and enrolling pupils in the public schools."

However, not all Legislators were pleased. B. I. Satterfield, Representative from Person County, said "the bill does just what its supporters hope it will prevent; it allows county and city school boards to open the schools to Negroes if they see fit." He had proposed a bill that would have denied State funds to any city or county which integrated in accordance with the Supreme Court decision.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., January 12, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., March 3, 1955, p. 32.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., March 30, 1955, p. 1; March 12, 1955, p. 1.

An article headed "S. C. Segregation Bills" revealed that "six bills designed to help the state keep its traditional racially segregated school system moved toward enactment by the General Assembly today."<sup>26</sup>

On April 10 the News and Observer carried the following article head on page one: "VIRGINIA ARGUES FOR STATUS QUO Tells Supreme Court School Integration 'Impossible at This Time.'" The basic argument was that "Negroes have a lower level of educational attainment and a higher rate of infectious diseases than whites." Intelligence quotient tests administered to high school seniors showed the lowest 25 per cent of the whites to be higher than the highest 25 per cent of Negroes. Reading tests given eighth graders showed the same results.

On April 14 page one carried this article head:

Threat to School System Is Cited  
If Immediate Integration Ordered

Attorney Lake Says Supreme Court Decree Would Place Schools In 'Gravest Danger of Abolition;' Says Order Would Lead to Racial Tensions and Animositities; Pleads For Gradualism, With Lower Courts Given Authority to Carry Out Segregation Ruling.

"The People's Forum" provided space for readers to express their viewpoints, which proved to be mostly opposed to any form of integration. In April, John W. Hester, of Pittsboro, wrote to the Editor:

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., March 2, 1955, p. 6.

It strikes me that the people of the South generally are now waking up to the fact that the NAACP desegregation campaign has been dishonest all the while, that equal educational advantages has not been its objective, but amalgamation of the races has been its purpose.

. . . . .  
Only the naive and gullible have failed to detect the purpose of the NAACP. Walter White, its former head and now dead, set the pattern by marrying a thorough-bred white woman. Its local head recently asked that all barriers to interracial marriages be abolished in this State. The purpose behind integration in the elementary schools of the South is not equal educational opportunities, but amalgamation of the races.<sup>27</sup>

In early May, Hester wrote again, this time addressing himself to the handling of the school issue

. . . the U. S. Supreme Court can't operate the public school system of the South. It can't compel either the Negro or white parents to send their children to school at all. The choice is still left as to whether the child attends at all so far as the U. S. Court or the Federal government is concerned. North Carolina will still finance and operate its schools. We can continue voluntarily as we have all these years. North Carolina, in the language of the U. S. Commission of Education, has attained realization of the separate but equal formula of education facilities. Really, North Carolina has done that which we, both Negro and white, should be extremely proud of - established a dual system in which there has been for a quarter of a century equal teacher pay and a progressive elimination of disparity in school equipment until there is now no appreciable difference.

This progress may be accelerated or halted; in fact, stopped dead still. I believe the white man can educate his progeny.

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., April 11, 1955, p. 4.

He is not going to send his children to nonsegregated primary and secondary public schools, and the U. S. Court can't make him. I doubt most seriously that the Negro is able to educate his progeny. In any event, a school system hated and therefore not supported by the majority of the people and upon which depends the financial support of the system is not going to be worth a continental damn anyway. As a sensible people, let's continue that with which we have done so well.<sup>28</sup>

In June, Sallie Clifton, of Raleigh, wrote:

Not so long ago our Southern Negroes were proud, and justly so, of the progress they had made.

Have they lost all racial pride? Do they feel incapable of running their schools and teaching their children?

Is it constitutional for nine men to impose unhappiness upon millions of people?

The Negroes themselves will be most unhappy when they realize that they have lost the last chance for advancement as a race.

They should be pleading for equal facilities and the right to have their own schools.

I have yet to see where any writer either pro or con has mentioned a single advantage to be gained by either race by desegregation in the public schools.<sup>29</sup>

On June 1, 1955 the News and Observer proclaimed in inch high headlines "INTEGRATION LEFT UP TO DISTRICT COURTS." It also reported on the same page that the decision "was warmly received by Southern leaders, who interpreted it as a means of indefinitely extending the touchy problem." Chief Justice M. V. Barnhill of the

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., May 3, 1955, p. 4.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., June 11, 1955, p. 4.

State Supreme Court was quoted on June 15 as saying he found no general mandate to end all school segregation in the decision, and Governor Hodges stated confidently that both races desired segregation in schools.<sup>30</sup>

However, the whole South was shocked by the report on July 3 that the Norfolk, Virginia school board had gone on record "as approving the principle of integration as laid down by the Supreme Court." An article head on page one of the News and Observer stated:

NORFOLK BOARD GOES ON RECORD  
FOR INTEGRATION

Cracks Solid Virginia Segregation Front By  
Approving In Principle.

In North Carolina white opposition to integration in the public schools remained solid. The Governor's Advisory Committee on Education recommended that "North Carolina public schools continue operating on a segregated basis during the approaching school year."<sup>31</sup> Attorney General Rodman was reported to think "the schools are in the clear to operate as usual this term."<sup>32</sup>

On August 8, 1955 Governor Hodges spoke to the people of North Carolina urging voluntary choice of separate

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., June 23, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., July 9, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., July 20, 1955, p. 1.



schools and stating that the alternatives to his plan were integration or abandonment of the public school system. In commenting editorially on the speech the News and Observer said: "Obviously the Governor directed his speech to the thoughtful, sober, conservative North Carolinians of both races. And they could not ask for a better statement of leadership than they received from him."<sup>33</sup> In late August, just prior to the opening of schools, Hodges spoke again, this time calling especially on the Negroes of the State to support his school plan.<sup>34</sup>

The following article head appeared on the front page of the October 14, 1955 News and Observer:

School Abolition Included In Plan Hodges  
Advanced

Hodges Makes Plain What 'Local Option'  
Means; Would leave to Communities Whether  
to Operate Schools Or Close Them; Governor  
Later Expresses Hope Public System Can Be  
Maintained.

In editorializing on the Governor's "Local Option Plan" the News and Observer stated that it would "turn back the clock a century . . . so far as public education is concerned."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., August 9, 1955, p. 4.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., August 27, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., October 14, 1955, p. 4.



Integration in 1955 was also an issue at the college level in North Carolina. On March 1 the following article appeared:

Trustees of the Greater University of North Carolina voted 57 - 15 yesterday in favor of permitting Negro farm and home agents to take a summer refresher course at State College along with other county farm and home agents.

The vote came in support of action taken by the University's executive committee after a sharp fight in which a minority group attacked the move as a 'step toward amalgamation of the races.'

The Negroes were to be quartered and were to obtain their meals at Shaw University, a Negro school.

On September 11 the News and Observer reported that the University of North Carolina policy against admission of Negroes had been overruled by the Federal District Court in Greensboro. On September 16 inch-high headlines read: "Negroes Enter University But Appeal Will Continue." In December the faculty of the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, in Greensboro, voted 95 to 25 endorsing desegregation.<sup>36</sup>

On the last day of the year, 1955, two article heads appeared on page one of the News and Observer; both addressing themselves to the 1954 court ruling, but presenting differing views. One read: "Tuskegee Says Integration

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., December 15, 1955, p. 1.

Making Definite Progress"; the other read: "State asks Supreme Court to Reverse Race Decision." The Court ruling marked the beginning of a new way of life in the South, but many conservative whites were not yet ready to admit defeat.

## CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

1905 - No Need for Mobs

Sex Crimes

A Negro captured and charged with criminal assault against a white woman, anywhere in the South in 1905, was almost certain to die. But the odds that he would at least be tried were much better than they had been some years before. Booker T. Washington, in addressing the annual session of the New York Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church which convened in New York City on May 10, 1905, said: "In 1895 there were 206 lynchings in the South alone; in the last six months there have been only thirteen in the entire country and in November and April there were none at all."<sup>1</sup> In April, the News and Observer reported with satisfaction that "For the first time in history of Mississippi a negro charged with assault against a white woman has been acquitted by a jury of white men."<sup>2</sup>

Of the lynchings reported by the News and Observer nearly half were the result of alleged criminal assaults

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<sup>1</sup>(Raleigh) News and Observer, May 11, 1905, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., April 23, 1905, p. 10.

upon white women. In most cases the victims were reported to have made full confessions before being murdered. The most unconvincing story reported was that of a young black who supposedly attempted to assault Mary Childs, near Sulphur Springs, Texas. According to the girl the accused advanced on her when she went into the fields to drive up the cows for milking. When she told him her sisters were nearby and would hear her if she screamed, he released her and ran. There were no witnesses, yet within four hours a mob had captured and burned a Negro. The article head read:

MOB MAKES TORCH OF A NEGRO SATYR  
DEATH PATH LIT BY HIS OWN BODY  
COOL AND DELIBERATE

In Less Than Four Hours After the Attempted Assault on Mary Childs the Curtain Falls on the Last Act in the Grim Drama.<sup>3</sup>

The only lynching of a Negro for having assaulted a white woman reported to have occurred in North Carolina in 1905, was reported on October 18, on page one; the entire article appearing in extra dark print. The head read:

AVENGED HER AT NAHUNTA BRIDGE  
MOB LYNCHES NEGRO IN GREEN COUNTY.  
EFFORT TO ASSAULT

Positively Identified by the Lady Whose Life He Would Have Made One Long Horror, He was Taken from Officers and Put to Death.

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., August 12, 1905, p. 1.

The next day the paper reported that the Negro had raped a sixty-year-old lady, and the mob which captured him had placed him in a bag, sunk the bag in a pond, and then fired on it. Three days later an article appeared refuting the whole incident, and stating that instead of having been lynched the Negro had escaped from officers and was still free.<sup>4</sup>

One possible reason for the decline in the number of lynchings was the speed with which trials were conducted and the almost certain convictions. Probably the speediest trial reported was in the case of a Negro in Kentucky who had been charged with assault. Officers, fearing a lynching, placed the Negro on a train and held court while speeding along the tracks. The Negro was tried, convicted, and sentenced to prison. When the train stopped it was at the State penitentiary.<sup>5</sup>

A clear example of blind racial prejudice was evidenced in the News and Observer on March 16, when it reported the attempted rape of a twelve-year-old white girl by a thirteen-year-old Negro boy, who was said to be extremely small for his age. There were also no witnesses to the assault, yet the article head read:

A SATYR FOILED

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., October 22, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., October 8, 1905, p. 9.

Brave Young Girl's Battle With Beast.

Capture of Vicious Thirteen Year  
Old Negro Who Would Have Made the  
Young Girl His Victim.

The crime committed in North Carolina which was most publicized by the News and Observer was the rape of Mrs. Lille Hales (white) by Walter Partridge (colored), near Fayetteville, on the afternoon of February 1. The eighteen-year-old Negro was tried, convicted, and sentenced to hang in a trial which lasted less than one day in Cumberland County Superior Court, after a special act of the legislature had conferred criminal jurisdiction on the civil term of court. Two days after the trial it was reported that "the prisoner had a fair trial throughout." On March 19 the News and Observer reported that a letter had been received by Governor Glenn, purporting to be from Mrs. Hales, which claimed that Partridge was not guilty. Two days later this letter was denied by Mrs. Hales and the inference was made that it was forged by Partridge. A letter to Governor Glenn from Partridge appeared April 5, as follows:

I beg you to save my life. It is in your hands to let me live or die, I say I know, God knows, whether I am guilty enough to be hung or not. I say I am not. You know nobody can die with a lie in his mouth. I will stand on the gallows and kiss the Bible that I never scratched up her face. I never fooled with her. I am telling you the truth, but nobody won't believe me. I beg you to give me life time in the State prison.



I am sorry for my poor old aged grandmother, who is seventy-five years old. It will grieve her to the grave.

You might have mercy and let me serve my life in prison. Let me live until the sixth of May. But I say let me go to prison for life I beg you to, please sir.

April 6, the day Partridge was to hang, the News and Observer reported that he had confessed to the crime and that he had forged the letters to the Governor purporting to be from Mrs. Hales. April 7, the day after the execution, the front page headline read: "BOY RAVISHER DIES ON GALLOWS."

The gallows had been erected inside the jail and when the trap was sprung, Partridge's neck was not broken. He began to swing wildly from side to side and was able to catch his feet in the pipes running along the side of the cell and thus relieve the pressure on his neck. His feet were pushed from the pipes and he was sent swinging wildly again. After twenty minutes the struggle ended.

Just prior to the hanging a white Baptist minister had offered a prayer, during the course of which he said:

We thank thee for the good conduct of the people, and for the full and fair trial that the prisoner was accorded and we pray that God's pity may be granted to him, and that his death may teach a lesson to all, and that being the wages of sin is death.

In speaking of the crime the News and Observer stated:

Partridge's victim was a woman of 125 pounds weight. Partridge was very small, weighing

possibly not more than 110 pounds. His arms and shoulders, however, showed remarkable physical development.

It also stated that

There seemed to have been a sentiment here that the hanging should have been made public as an example to the negroes. From the way in which the execution has been made the common topic, however, it would seem that the end desired has been obtained.<sup>6</sup>

A Negro who committed a sex offense against another Negro could not be so sure of the verdict as if his victim had been white. One Ernest Scott was convicted of attempted criminal assault upon a colored woman and given a sentence of ten years.<sup>7</sup> A Paul Jordan was tried on the charge of attempting to criminally assault a Negro girl, Lorine Atwater. When there was no evidence other than the girl's testimony, the trial magistrate discharged the man and "taxed the prosecuting witness with the cost."<sup>8</sup> The unusual story of Henry Strickland was reported as follows:

Henry Strickland is an old negro 70 years old, and was convicted by the Franklin court at the October term, 1903, for an assault with attempt to commit rape on a colored girl named Lillian King. The old man denied his guilt, but the jury convicted him. The judge stated that he was doubtful of the verdict, but would give him the benefit of his doubts, and he received the minimum

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., February 23, April 7, 1905.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., November 1, 1905, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., April 6, 1905, p. 5.

punishment, five years in the penitentiary. Since then it has been discovered that the girl was a prostitute, at the time the crime was committed. The trial judge, solicitor, jury and sheriff, besides many prominent citizens, recommended a pardon, and it was affirmed that the prosecutrix was a prostitute.<sup>9</sup>

The death sentence was given in all cases reported when children were the victims.

Odd though it may seem, there was not even one report of an attack by a white man on a colored woman, during the entire year.

Acts of Violence, Other Than Sex Crimes,  
Committed by Negroes Against Negroes

The majority of violent crimes committed by Negroes against those of their own race which were reported by the News and Observer, were the result of drinking, gambling, or promiscuous living. Such incidents were reported in a matter-of-fact way and later results in the cases were seldom reported. Such articles were usually short and article heads were terse statements of the crimes, such as

DRUNKEN NEGRO SHOTS WIFE.<sup>10</sup>

or

SHOT IN A BAWDY HOUSE.

Negro Dies Within an Hour From the  
Effect of His Wound.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., April 8, 1905, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., January 28, 1905, p. 2.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., March 25, 1905, p. 4.

On April 25, 1905, a brawl between two drunken Negroes was reported. One black supposedly shot the other in the stomach twice. The wounded Negro then beat his opponent severely before dying. The article head read:

THRASHED HIS SLAYER.

Remarkable Performance of a Negro  
Wounded to His Death.

During the month of December alone, three murders were reported from North Carolina, as the result of card games between Negroes.<sup>12</sup>

One crime which in most cases brought the death sentence was wife murder. There were exceptions, however, such as in the case of Green McAdoo, of Guilford County, who received a thirty year sentence.<sup>13</sup> A number of other incidents involving members of one family were reported, such as the shooting of Dock McNeill by his son, in Clarkton, North Carolina on April 28. The article states:

Dock McNeill, a negro, was shot down in his home and his son Dock, a sixteen-year-old boy, who it was known bore no love to his father, was arrested and lodged in jail at Elizabethtown, charged with the crime. Later he confessed the crime, saying he wanted the old man dead so that he could have a big time. It is feared that the father's wound may prove fatal.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., December, 6, 8, 19.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., May 16, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., April 29, 1905, p. 3.

On January 10, an article appeared, the head of which read:

# IS SHE A PARRICIDE?

Willis Neville, "a fairly respectable negro of about sixty years of age," was found murdered in his house. There was no evidence as to who committed the crime and there were no witnesses. It was remembered however, that his daughter, "a bad character, once married but now parted from her husband," had made some threats and she was immediately arrested. At the preliminary hearing no evidence was obtained. Yet, "the woman was bound over without bail to the next term of Orange County Superior Court."<sup>15</sup>

An unusual story which appeared on page one of the April 20 edition of the News and Observer involved the lynching of a Negro by a mob of Negroes. The story read:

Enraged at the action of John Barnett, a negro, in shooting and killing Albert Walsefield, another negro, last Sunday, because the latter circulated the report that Barnett was a dangerous man, twenty other negroes employed in a lever camp near Askew, have taken Barnett out and hanged him.

Of all the violent acts committed by Negroes against Negroes, those committed by "wild young Negroes"

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., January 10, 1905, p. 1.



against "old respectable Negroes" brought the loudest condemnation from the News and Observer.

Acts of Violence, Other Than Sex Crimes,  
Committed by Negroes Against Whites

White officers of the law composed the group most often attacked violently by Negroes, according to the reporting of the News and Observer. One such act occurred in Lexington, North Carolina, January 25, and was reported the next day as follows:

While retailing from a buggy here in open violation of the law, Nat Crump and another negro were ordered by Officers Heitman and Shoaf to desist. The negroes whipped up their horse in an effort to escape arrest and drove out the Winston road followed by the crack of pistols in the hands of the officers.

The latter, having secured horses, pursued them eight miles, when the negroes turned from the road into a dense body of woods. As the Officers were about to follow a heavy load of buckshot struck Officer Shoaf in the face, the shot having been fired by one of the fugitives. The chase was at once given up, the officers returning to town and swearing out warrants against the desperadoes.

It is probable that a posse will be sent out to capture and bring them in.<sup>16</sup>

In every court case reported when an officer had been murdered by a Negro, the defendant received the death sentence. On April 27, 1905, an article head on page two read:

BY RAIL TO THE GALLOWS.

A Demonstration of How Rapidly  
The Wheels of Justice May Revolve.

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., January 26, 1905, p. 4.



The details were given as follows:

Peter Thomas, the negro who on the night of the fifteenth instant killed Marshal John Maniers, of Pretoria, Ga., in the western part of this county, was today indicted, tried, found guilty and sentenced to hang. Judge Spencer, in view of the high feeling against Thomas in the Pretoria neighborhood, decided to dispose of the case without delay. A special grand jury was accordingly drawn this morning and at 11 o'clock was organized. It returned true bill in a few minutes and the case was called for trial before noon. At 2 p. m. the trial jury had retired and at 2:30 Judge Spencer passed sentence of death upon the murderer. Thomas was sentenced to hang on June 2nd.

When Cloyd Hale (black) was indicted for the murder of John Hart (white) tried, convicted, and sentenced to death, all in less than an hour, at Pulaski, Virginia, the article head read:

"RAILROADING" A MURDERER.<sup>17</sup>

Five weeks later when Hale was hanged the News and Observer recounted the rapidity of the court proceedings, then stated: "On the gallows Hale declared his fate a just one and warned his race to let whiskey alone and keep out of politics."<sup>18</sup> There was never any criticism, but only praise for such rapid proceedings.

On November 15, an article from the Richmond News Leader was reprinted which struck at Northern criticism of discrimination against the Negro in the South.

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., April 8, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., May 13, 1905, p. 1.

Georgia has just finished another text for sermons on "southern justice in dealing with the negro," by our hysterical negro-philistic contemporaries at the North. Five men, four white--a father and three sons--and a negro were tried for the murder of some white children and all were found guilty. The negro was sentenced to imprisonment for life; but "of course" there was "discrimination when it came to the whites and they were sentenced to hang."

Articles which appeared in the News and Observer in June reported that the Negro had been with the white man and his sons, but that the whites had done all the shooting. They had been found guilty of murder; and he had been convicted of complicity with the murderers, thus explaining the difference in the sentences.<sup>19</sup>

Acts of Violence Committed  
by Whites Against Negroes

Action taken by police officers when arresting Negroes, as reported by the News and Observer, was anything but a gentle affair, but not once was the action of a policeman even questioned. Rarely was the action of any white man criticized or questioned when the man was dealing with a Negro. Three incidents which were reported in January bear this out. The first occurred on January 4, in Benoit, Mississippi. A Negro broke into the home of a white family at night and upon entering the room of a young girl struck a match. The girl awoke and screamed

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., June 15-22.

and the Negro ran from the house. The next day a Negro was captured and placed in jail, and that night a mob took him from the jail and hanged him.<sup>20</sup> The Negro had been seen only by match light by a young girl awakened suddenly from her sleep, yet no questions were asked about how he was identified the next day. The second incident occurred in Winston Salem, North Carolina, on January 9, and was reported as follows:

Mr. Robert Helm, night-telegraph operator at the Norfolk and Western depot, while on his way to work, shot and perhaps, mortally wounded, Thomas Lyle, colored. Mr. Helm met the negro who pushed him off the side walk. Lyle was reprimanded for his action whereupon the negro cursed Mr. Helm and threw his hand to his hip pocket. The white man then fired, the ball entering Lyle's right breast and locating just below the shoulder blade.

Mr. Helm was not required to give bail, the evidence showing that the shooting was justifiable.<sup>21</sup>

The third incident occurred in Maxton, North Carolina, on January 25. The coroner's jury ruled that Ernest Burns, a white man, killed M. Mitchell, a Negro, in Burns' father's store. Burns claimed that another white man was present and committed the crime, but the jury accepted as fact the account that only Burns and Mitchell were in the store when the shooting occurred.<sup>22</sup> On February 18, the News and Observer

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., January 5, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., January 10, 1905, p. 3.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., January 27, 1905, p. 1.

reported that "Ernest Burns . . . was acquitted at this term of the Superior Court. There was so little evidence against him that the case was not even given to the jury."

Unkind treatment of old, well behaved Negroes was at times criticized by the press and other whites. When Moriah Akins was jailed for refusing to be vaccinated because her daughter had just had a baby and she needed both arms to help care for them, the News and Observer wrote:

Though an old black mammie, and perhaps of little service to those about her now, yet that magistrate ought to blush in shame for treating an old decrepit human being in such a manner.

This old negro has the same love in her heart for her children that any mother has, and it was natural that she did not wish to put her arm out of service until her child was out of danger.<sup>23</sup>

Two days later the whole affair was explained by Dr. McCullers, the county physician, who concluded that "the magistrate meted out the law required and had no malice at all and was not deserving of criticism."<sup>24</sup> When Mr. M. W. Keller, foreman on a construction job in Greensboro, struck and seriously injured an old Negro man, all of the other workmen, black and white, met, notified the contractor of the assault, and demanded the discharge of the foreman. The foreman was given a leave of absence before the workmen returned to work.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., February 26, 1905, p. 12.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., February 28, 1905, p. 5.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., May 17, 1905, p. 5.

If a white man was insulted by a Negro, however, almost any retaliatory action was justifiable. Two such cases were reported on May 17. The first involved the striking of a Negro hack driver by a white man. When the case came up in Police Justice Court, it was dismissed for "want of evidence." The Justice said "he appreciated the difficulty from restraining to strike, which Nelson the white man labored under, after being insulted." The second case resulted from an argument between a white boy and a Negro boy during an afternoon ball game. The former claimed that the latter grossly insulted him, arousing his "anger and pride" and that he struck the Negro with a baseball bat. The News and Observer stated that "Gunter the Negro was severely injured but no serious consequence is likely to result from the blow."

On December 27, 1905, the News and Observer reported the lynching of two Negroes at Barnwell, South Carolina. This was nothing unusual, but the fact that Sheriff Creech placed the blame on the officers in charge of guarding the two men and wired Governor Heyward that he was preparing to make arrests, and the fact that Governor Heyward announced that he would sustain the sheriff in this action was unusual.<sup>26</sup> Steps were being taken at last to set at least some limit as to how far whites could go in their treatment of Negroes.

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., December 27, 1905, p. 2.



### Petty Crimes

The most common petty crime for which Negroes were arrested was burglary, but two incidents reported in March show the severity with which such offenders were treated. Seimster King was arrested and charged with stealing the clothing of three young white men, in Greensboro. After the preliminary hearing he was committed to jail without bail on the charge of burglary. The

News and Observer report stated:

To show how little the average darkey knows about the seriousness of some offences, King yesterday plead to be allowed to work his offence out on the roads and be done with it. He declared that he 'didn't want to be hangin' round here waiting' for cote an' doin' nuthin' all the time.' He seemed dazed when told that he might have cause to be thankful that he wasn't found hanging by the neck some of these days on account of his offence.<sup>27</sup>

The other incident occurred in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, and was reported as follows:

. . . Richard Turner, who has just been sent to the state penitentiary to serve a sentence of twenty years for burglary, admitted before leaving that he is the same negro who entered the home of Mrs. Sanders, in the First Ward, a few years ago with the intention of burglarizing the house, for which crime another negro was sentenced to be hanged, but was saved from the gallows by the governor who commuted the sentence to life imprisonment. The negro who was sent to prison for life died there some time ago.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., March 31, 1905, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., March 23, 1905, p. 3.



Hanging was not the usual sentence for small crimes, such as burglary, but a sentence of twenty to thirty years imprisonment was not uncommon.

#### 1930 - Shame of the South

##### Sex Crimes

Mob violence was on the upswing in the United States in 1930 with twenty men being lynched by October 4, according to a report from Tuskegee Institute. Of the twenty, nineteen were Negroes. Of the nineteen, ten were allegedly hanged for rape or attempted rape. One lynched Negro was the star witness against two white men charged with attempted rape of a Negro woman. The lynchings occurred as far north as Indiana and as far west as Texas and Oklahoma.<sup>29</sup>

Much of the violence toward the Negro by mobs and the courts can be attributed to what W. J. Cash called the "Southern rape complex." As Cash explained:

. . . Southern woman's place in the Southern mind proceeded primarily from the natural tendency of the great basic pattern of pride in superiority of race to center upon her as the perpetuator of that superiority in legitimate line, and attached itself precisely, and before everything else, to her enormous remoteness from the males of the inferior group, to the absolute taboo on any sexual approach to her by the Negro.

. . . . .  
What Southerners felt, therefore, was that any assertion of any kind on the part of the Negro constituted in a perfectly real manner an attack on the Southern woman.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., October 19, 1930, p. 3.

<sup>30</sup>W. J. Cash, The Mind of the South (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1941) pp. 118-19.

Violence, therefore, was demanded in defense of the Southern woman, and often the results were disastrous.

On May 5, 1930, the following article head appeared on page one of the News and Observer:

HUNDREDS HUNT NEGROES WHO ATTACKED  
GIRL AND WOUNDED HER COMPANION

Eighteen-Year-Old Victim in Pitiabale  
State In Hospital Where Young Man May  
Be Dying

CRIME COMMITTED NEAR BATTLEBORO  
SATURDAY NIGHT

Believed that Same Two Negroes Who Were  
Responsible For Double Offense Also Killed  
Aged Member of Their Own Race and Badly  
Wounded Another; Fifteen Negroes Are Under  
Arrest After Long Hunt, But Officers Be-  
lieve Right Men Not Yet Captured

BY ROBERT THOMPSON,  
Staff Correspondent

The article began,

Rocky Mount, May 4.---Driven by horror  
and hate, hundreds of men continued their  
search of Edgecombe county tonight to find  
and to kill the two Negroes who last night com-  
mitted the most atrocious crime this section  
has experienced in years--the dual ravishing  
of 18-year-old Elizabeth Powell, the fatal  
wounding of her escort, Frank Crickmore, and  
the murder of Joe Lee, old Negro man.

On May 6, it was reported on page one that the search  
was continuing and that the fear of a lynching had eased.  
The next day, again on page one, it was reported that offi-  
cers "believe perpetrators of outrages will soon be cap-  
tured." On page two a posse was reported searching for two  
blacks near Elizabeth City who were thought to be the same  
men wanted in Rocky Mount. On May 9, a front page article  
head read:

# NEGRO IS KILLED IN FIERCE BATTLE

Belhaven Officer After Desperate Encounter  
Sends Shot Into Black's Head

The article explained:

On Wednesday he [George Darrow] 25 year-old Negro accosted a young white girl in the doorway of one of the leading stores and is said to have talked impudently to her, also referring to the criminal assault case which occurred near Battleboro last week.

The girl reported the affair to Chief Jones who upon advice from Judge Leigh attempted to arrest the Negro.

The same day an article datelined "Tarboro, May 8" stated that "Ministers of the colored churches, colored school teachers, and colored business men here adopted a resolution condemning the atrocious crimes that were committed in the vicinity of Battleboro Saturday night...."<sup>31</sup>

The News and Observer editorialized about the case on May 22, 1930.

These posses, in time of great excitement produced by the commission or the allegations of heinous crimes, are little better than mobs. At Battleboro, it was a foregone conclusion that if Negroes answering the descriptions of those alleged to have shot a young man and attacked his girl companion had been caught, there would have been a quick lynching.

Developments which promise to be sensational may not only vindicate the officers of the law in their futile efforts to catch two Negroes who were charged with the offense, but with evidence mounting that the crime was not a Negro crime, they vindicate, if vindication were needed, all those who maintain that conviction and punishment for crime should be left to judge and jury.

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<sup>31</sup>(Raleigh) News and Observer, May 9, 1930, p. 12.

After a written interview with Frank Crickmore the News and Observer reported May 23, 1930, on page one, that he thought Elizabeth Powell knew who shot him. The next day officers were reported to "believe that a white man's jealousy rather than two Negroes' bestiality is responsible for the crime."

In January, 1930, a young white girl was criminally assaulted near Reidsville, North Carolina. Several hundred enraged white citizens joined in the search for Robert Carter, 30-year-old Negro, believed to be the assailant. Carter, "who answers the description given by Miss Baynes", the young woman assaulted, was not apprehended quickly as officers had thought he would be and a reward was offered for his capture. Disorder in the city of Reidsville was reported to have continued for several nights, bringing "a scare to women and children, and especially Negroes."<sup>32</sup>

After several days, reports about the incident ceased. Nearly a month later, however, the following article appeared in the News and Observer:

ACCUSED OF OUTRAGE, NEGRO TRIED  
SUICIDE

Reidsville, Feb. 12.--Sam Garland, Negro, held by city officers in connection with the assault committed here on a young woman on January 13, made an unsuccessful attempt to take his own life at the city jail. He broke a mirror that was in his cell and made a long deep gash across his stomach. However, Chief of Police Jackson had a physician at the jail within a very short

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., January 14-17, 1930.

time to render aid and sew up the ugly gash. The Negro will recover.

Garland was arrested on suspicion shortly after the crime was committed, and has told the officers conflicting stories.

It is reported that Garland bears a bad reputation and positive identification will probably be established.<sup>33</sup>

In April, 1930, the News and Observer reported the lynching of a Negro in South Carolina, allegedly for attempted rape. In May, a Texas mob was reported to have burned down a \$60,000 court house after a Negro, on trial for rape, had been locked inside a steel-walled vault by Texas Rangers in an attempt to save his life. In June, a 19-year-old Negro, charged with attacking a white woman, was reportedly shot to death in his jail cell in a small Oklahoma town. In August two young Negroes accused of "slaying a white man and attacking his girl companion," were reported to have been lynched in Marion, Indiana.<sup>34</sup> After the Indiana lynchings the following editorial appeared:

The lynching in Marion, Indiana, takes its place in the annals of savagery alongside the recent brutalities in Texas. It merely goes to show that no State has a monopoly on mob violence.

It is very true that the frequent resorts to lynch law in the South credited this section of the country with a reputation difficult to live down and Southerners who were shamed thereby could only remark that lynching was not an activity of its best people. But the record of the South in this respect generally

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., February 13, 1930, p. 7.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., April 25, 1930, p. 1; May 10, 1930, p. 1; June 1, 1930, p. 1; August 11, 1930, p. 1.



is something to respect nowadays. Doubtless for a long time there will be sporadic outbursts of lynching in the Southern States but there will be lynching in other States as well. There seems to be no geographical limits to mob insanity.

The New York World observing that lynching is not restricted to any one State, takes the Indiana affair as evidence that the sense of social responsibility is still weak in many of our people, "especially in those whose ancestors for generations have led comparatively isolated lives in rural communities."<sup>35</sup>

Just eight days later the horror of the lynch mob struck close home. A front page article head in the News and Observer on August 20, 1930, read:

MORBID CROWD SWARMS  
AROUND BLOODY BODY OF  
NEGRO LYNCHED BY MOB

Two Hundred Masked Men Take Oliver Moore,  
Charged With Ravishing Two Little Girls,  
From Edgecombe County Jail

OFFICERS DON'T KNOW SINGLE MAN  
WHO TOOK PART IN MOB MURDER

Parents Bring Little Children To View Body of  
Dead Negro, Swinging From Pine Tree in Wilson  
County; Doctors to Determine If Negro Had  
Venereal Disease Given Two Children

Editorially the News and Observer blamed the lynching on the lack of "vigilance of officials involved." It stated emphatically that "Oliver Moore was lynched because the Edgecombe County sheriff ignored an obvious warning in the thoroughly understood sense of outrage general throughout that section."<sup>36</sup> When the lynching probe produced no clues

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., August 11, 1930, p. 4.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., August 20, 1930, p. 4.



as to the identity of those responsible the News and Observer spoke out again:

Oliver Moore wasn't lynched because courts have failed and Governors have abused the pardoning power. Very rarely do Negro rapists escape the courts. The law is signally effective here. Oliver Moore was lynched because there was a sufficient number of men in the community willing to take the law into their own hands and because the lynching involved neither substantial obstacle in the way of laying hold of the prisoner nor personal risk to the lynchers.<sup>37</sup>

In October, a Granville County Negro was arrested and charged with criminal assault upon a white woman. When rumors of violence were heard the prisoner was brought to the State Prison in Raleigh for safe keeping. The News and Observer responded editorially to this action:

Congratulations to the Granville authorities upon promptly bringing the Negro charged with rape to the State Penitentiary for safe-keeping. There is no danger that any rapist will escape punishment by due process of law. And that is more impressive and is the only way in keeping with civilization.<sup>38</sup>

The effectiveness of the courts in punishing rapists was proved in the case of Harvey Lawrence of Hertford County who was charged with first degree burglary and attempted assault. A special term of Superior Court in Hertford County was held in order to hear the case. After listening to the arguments in the case the jury deliberated

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., August 25, 1930, p. 4.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., October 19, 1930, p. 4.

for twenty minutes, then convicted Lawrence, on the first ballot, of first degree burglary. He was then sentenced to die in the electric chair. In reporting the case the News and Observer stated: "There has been little doubt in the minds of any persons attending the trial that the Negro would be convicted of the offense with which he was charged."<sup>39</sup>

A Negro charged with criminal assault (or any other crime) was considered guilty unless proven innocent. When Wilbur McLeod, a Lee County Negro sentenced to die for the rape and murder of a 77-year-old white woman, had his case reviewed by the Governor and his sentence commuted to life imprisonment, it was reported that "investigation of his case will continue. If he is innocent, every effort will be made to determine it."<sup>40</sup>

That investigations did sometimes continue with rewarding results was proven when the following article appeared on page one of the November 6, 1930, News and Observer:

Once Doomed Negro May  
Now Hunt Another Job

Little Alvin Mansel, one of the few living arguments against mob madness and for fair, calm trials of the underprivileged, was yesterday paroled by Governor Gardner who declared that he was 'absolutely convinced' that the 22-year-old Negro was innocent of the rape for which he was sentenced to die five years ago.

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., April 26, 1930, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., June 24, 1930, p. 1.

A sex crime committed by a Negro against a Negro in 1930 was seldom newsworthy. However, when a Mebane Negro raped a Negro girl it was reported that whites and Negroes joined the posse which captured him.<sup>41</sup>

Attacks by white men on Negro women still went unnoticed in North Carolina, but several attacks by white men on white women were reported to have occurred. The following two article heads tell the results:

GETS 10 TO 15 YEARS  
FOR CRIMINAL ASSAULT

CONFESSES GUILT  
GIVEN FOUR YEARS

Sampson Man, Charged With  
Rape, Pleads Guilty to Assault.<sup>42</sup>

Acts of Violence, Other Than Sex  
Crimes, Committed by Negroes  
Against Negroes

The reporting in the News and Observer of violent crimes committed by Negroes against those of their own race changed little during the twenty-five years from 1905 to 1930. Most incidents still resulted from drinking, gambling, or promiscuous living, and were reported in the same matter-of-fact way; usually without any follow up reporting. Article heads were the same terse statements of the crimes, such as

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., June 3, 1930, p. 8.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., September 11, 1930, p. 15; October 25, 1930, p. 8.

NEGRO MAN KILLED IN DRUNKEN  
BRAWL<sup>43</sup>

or

ALLEGED KILLER OF NEGRO FOUND  
James Dunn, Charged With Killing Another  
Negro, Arrested in Warrenton.<sup>44</sup>

Punishment for crimes was not determined by the crime committed, in most cases, but rather by the attitude of the whites toward the Negro offender. Zander Lane shot another Negro through the hand; was convicted and sentenced to two years on the road. In reporting the trial the News and Observer stated: "At the trial yesterday it developed that Zander is considered by policemen variously as a 'bad egg', a 'mean nigger' and a 'would-be desperado'."<sup>45</sup>

The murder of a Negro woman was the crime most likely to bring the death sentence. On November 7, 1930, the following article head appeared on page one:

Two Confessed Killers  
To Die in Chair Today

Will Sloan and Willie Massey had both been convicted of killing Negro women. Earlier in the year Lonnie Parker had been sentenced to die for killing his wife. However, Governor Gardner commuted his sentence to life imprisonment because of his "low mentality."<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., April 15, 1930, p. 2.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., April 9, 1930, p. 7.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., July 2, 1930, p. 3.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., January 19, 1930, p. 2; May 16, 1930, p. 2.

The sentences for woman murder did vary considerably. Lee Hargrove who cut Lillie Belle Gilmore's throat because "she taunted him about her favors toward another man," was charged with second degree murder and sentenced to thirty years at hard labor. Albert Dunn, who killed a Negro woman "in a fit of jealousy," was charged with second degree murder and sentenced to fifteen years.<sup>47</sup>

Sentences for Negroes who murdered black men were considerably lighter. Two Craven County Negroes, convicted of second degree murder for the slaying of another Negro man, were sentenced to not less than eight years or more than ten years. A Lee County black, who killed another Negro man, entered a plea of guilty to manslaughter and was sentenced to from three to five years.<sup>48</sup> The age of the victim did sometimes make a difference. Henry Daniels, nineteen, was convicted of second degree murder for killing William Ange, eighty-three, and sentenced to thirty years.<sup>49</sup>

Punishment of Negroes who committed acts of violence against those of their own race was irregular, at best, and exoneration on grounds of self-defense was not uncommon, as the following article heads show:

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid., June 28, 1930, p. 3; August 30, 1930, p. 8.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., January 14, 1930, p. 10; May 10, 1930, p. 5.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., November 12, 1930, p. 5.



NEGRO DIES FROM BRICK-BAT WOUND  
Negro Charged With Blow Is Released  
When Self-Defense Is Proven.<sup>50</sup>

NEGRO KILLS NEGRO, ABSOLVED OF BLAME.<sup>51</sup>

WARREN NEGRO IS FATALLY SHOT  
Jury Exonerates Slayer On Ground That  
He Acted in Self-Defense.<sup>52</sup>

Acts of Violence, Other Than Sex Crimes,  
Committed by Negroes Against Whites.

White officers of the law were still prime targets of Negro violence in 1930, according to the reporting of the News and Observer. Article heads, such as the following, were not uncommon:

One Held On Charge of Shooting Officer.<sup>53</sup>

TWO ARE HELD IN  
OFFICER'S DEATH  
Robert Morgan and William  
Foye, Both Negroes, Face  
Charges.<sup>54</sup>

Posse Shoots Negro Who  
Wounded Weldon Officer  
Chief of Police Crew in Hospital  
at Roanoke in Critical Condition

NEGRO GUARDED IN  
SAME INSTITUTION  
Crowd of 200 Men Led By  
Officers Shot Negro After  
an Hours Search.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., January 25, 1930, p. 5.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., February 6, 1930, p. 8.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., September 18, 1930, p. 5.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., January 1, 1930, p. 3.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., September 23, 1930, p. 8.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., October 20, 1930, p. 1.



The usual sentence for the murder of an officer was death. Ray Evans, of Richmond, was electrocuted on February 14, 1930, for killing an officer, although he contended to his death that he killed the constable in self-defense.<sup>56</sup> Another futile plea of self-defense was reported on page two of the March 20, 1930, News and Observer.

John Macon, Negro, who shot and killed a special officer who sought to arrest him last May for killing a man in 1912, must die in the electric chair in April. The Supreme Court today reported 'No error' in Macon's appeal for a death sentence given him in Superior Court.

On May 3, 1929, Sam Pinell, at the request of his brother, a Warren County deputy sheriff, went with two other officers, one of them another brother, to a farm near Warrenton to arrest Macon at the request of the Sheriff of Franklin County, who said that the Negro left the county in 1912 after killing a man.

In making the arrest Sam Pinell was fatally shot, and the Negro himself was wounded. The Supreme Court denied Macon's plea that he acted in self-defense and declared that he had been given a fair trial. His electrocution date is automatically set for April 11. He admitted the killing in 1912, but said it was accidental.

Frank Simmons, a Guilford County Negro convicted of the murder of Deputy Sheriff W. T. Bowman and sentenced to die in the electric chair, had his conviction set aside and a new trial ordered by the Supreme Court. In the

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., February 14, 1930, p. 11.

opinion handed down by the Supreme Court, Simmons was "chicken thieving" with another Negro on the night Bowman was killed, and "hearsay evidence" in which an officer testified that Simmons companion "told him" that Simmons shot Bowman should have been ruled out. At the new trial Simmons was again convicted of first degree murder and sentenced to die in the electric chair. After the second trial the jury petitioned Governor Gardner to commute the sentence to life, which the Governor did.<sup>57</sup>

Court proceedings were not usually as hasty in 1930 as they had been twenty-five years earlier, but the ultimate results were much the same. In April, 1930, four Negroes were jailed and charged with the murder and robbery of an aged white man. On May 14, Aaron Sharp and Berry Richardson were tried and convicted, the jury being out only seven minutes. The next day Wright Bynum and William Randall went on trial for the same crime. On May 17 the News and Observer reported that all four men had been convicted and sentenced to die in the electric chair. Bynum and Randall appealed to the Supreme Court, but before their appeal was heard, Sharp and Richardson admitted that Bynum and Randall were innocent. The trial judge questioned the confessions of Sharp and Richardson

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., April 17, 1930, p. 9; May 6, 1930, p. 2; June 20, 1930, p. 2.

and opposed any action to change the death sentences of any of the four men. The Governor did, however, commute the sentences of Randall and Bynum on September 25, the day before all four men were to have been executed.<sup>58</sup>

Another case which appeared periodically in the News and Observer during the entire year of 1930, involved two Negro men, Lancey Stearling and George Davis, who were tried, convicted, and sentenced to die for the murder of a crippled white storekeeper who attempted to resist a holdup. Sterling, who denied any guilt, was identified by the murdered storekeeper's seventeen-year-old sister. The girl told officers after the murder that the murderer had a heavy beard, but she identified him in a lineup clean shaven. The validity of her identification of the man was sustained, however, when a police officer testified that "he appeared to have shaved hastily with a dull razor in cold water." The Governor did order a reprieve "to halt their execution Christmas week."<sup>59</sup>

Criminal Acts Committed by  
Whites Against Negroes

A change of attitude regarding actions by whites against Negroes was evidenced by reporting in the News

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., April 13 - September 26, 1930.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., January 6, 1930, p. 2.; March 21, 1930, p. 1; December 11, 1930, p. 1.

and Observer after the death on July 26 of Willie Bellamy.

A page one article head on August 5, 1930 read:

State Investigates Death  
Of Negro Convict in Wake  
Inspector Whitley Seeks to Determine  
Truth of Reports that Brutality, Not  
Heat, Caused Bellamy's Death; County  
Physician and Road Supervisor Says  
He Was Not Struck.

The next day the News and Observer reported that Bellamy had been placed in a "sweat box" after having a heat stroke. An editorial headed "NO PLACE FOR SWEAT BOX" appeared the same day. It stated:

To begin with, the Negro was sentenced to ninety days on the roads for selling whiskey. The punishment he received converted his road sentence to a death decree. The Negro is the victim. But beyond this all Wake County is the victim. There is no place in this enlightened day for the punishment of the lash or the sweat box or the muzzle or any of the other atrocities that brutality begets when it is put in complete control of the helpless.

Mrs. Bost's investigation, one may be sure, will develop the facts. But this much is admitted. The sweat box is a part of the discipline of at least one Wake County Prison camp. That is enough to damn the system and those who are responsible for it.

A full investigation of Bellamy's death was made and reported to the welfare commissioner. After careful study the case was put before a Grand Jury. The Grand Jury indicted the prison camp superintendent, Gordon Watkins, along with Vance Mangum and Swannie Council, on charges of manslaughter. During the trial Dr. Charles B. Wilkerson, Wake County physician, testified that "Willie Bellamy was handcuffed

and shackled in a four feet by six 'sweat box' a few hours after suffering a 'sunstroke,' and died with a temperature above 110 degrees." The trial ended with Mangum and Council being found not guilty and Watkins being found guilty of "deadly assault" and receiving a six months jail sentence.<sup>60</sup>

The punishment was minimal, but the fact that the News and Observer kept the case before the public and that any action was taken was significant. The usual procedure was for an officer who killed a Negro to appear before a coroner's jury which would find that the officer acted in self-defense and that the homicide was justifiable.<sup>61</sup>

J. P. Alley's Hambone told News and Observer readers much about the relationship between the "po-liceman" and "dat nigguh," and Hambone obviously had a white mind.

TOM'S BOY GOT CUTTIN-UP DRUNK  
LAS' NIGHT EN SOME PO-LICEMAN  
JES' NACH'LY DONE HE DUTY ON  
DAT NIGGUH!!

A LAWYUH KIN AX YOU HEAP O'  
FOOLISH QUESTIONS BUT A PO-LICEMAN, HE GITS RIGHT DOWN  
TO DE SUBJEC' WID YOU!!

YOUNG MISTUH JOE, HE GIMME  
DIS OLE COON SKIN OVERCOAT,

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., August 9, 1930, p. 1; August 10, 1930, p. 1; September 16, 1930, p. 1; September 17, 1930, p. 9; October 30, 1930, p. 1; November 1, 1930, p. 1.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., January 3, 1930, p. 2; February 23, 1930, p. 2; October 9, 1930, p. 10.



BUT EF'N I WO' DAT THING TO  
TOWN SOME PO-LICEMAN RES' ME  
FO I GOT SOT GOOD!<sup>62</sup>

On March 1, 1930, Alley's Hambone said, "DAT YOUNG  
LAWYUH CALLED HIS-SE'F FENDIN' 'SLOW BOY' BUT DE SPEECH  
HE MADE JES' NACH'LY PREACHED DAT NIGGUH'S FUN'AL!" Alley  
was probably closer to the truth than most people realized  
at that time. There were very few black lawyers in 1930  
and most Negroes charged with crimes could not afford to  
hire a lawyer anyway. Sometimes white lawyers took ad-  
vantage of their black clients. One "highly respected"  
white lawyer, W. C. Douglas, of Tarboro, was sentenced to  
a year and a day for defrauding "two illiterate old Negro  
women out of the greater part of the pensions the govern-  
ment had given them following the deaths of their veteran  
sons."<sup>63</sup>

One thing was certain in 1930, a discourtesy to a  
white by a Negro was grounds for immediate retaliation.  
In fact, retaliation was expected and approved as the  
following article illustrates:

That Raleigh is still below the Mason-  
Dixon Line, and that she still believes in  
observing her civilities and courtesies to  
woman, was evidenced yesterday morning when  
Carroll Weathers, Raleigh attorney, laid

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., January 2, 1930, p. 5; August 20, 1930,  
p. 12; November 11, 1930, p. 12.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., November 19, 1930, p. 1.



his knuckles open upon a Negro's mouth in an altercation that grew out of alleged discourtesy to a white woman.

It was charged that David Weaver, A Negro employed by Dr. Eugene B. Howle, in the Odd Fellow's building, pushed his way in front of a white woman when the elevator descended to the ground floor. Mr. Weathers, who was also on the elevator, observed this, and when the Negro also darted in front of him as they passed through the revolving door in the vestibule, the attorney civilly suggested that it was not conventional to rush ahead of a lady in leaving an elevator, and that it was conventional to await one's turn at a revolving door.

Mr. Weathers charged that the Negro began cursing loudly and declared that it was none of his business. Informed that it was, the Negro is alleged to have called him a liar. Witnesses bore out these charges. The attorney's fist smashed into the Negro's mouth as he himself was struck upon the cheek. Policeman Jesse L. Caviness arrested the Negro, and after some resistance carried him to jail.<sup>64</sup>

Despite the many obstacles in the way, social consciousness was beginning to awaken slowly among the South's "best people." This did not prevent a mob from taking the law into its hands, nor did it bring the perpetrators of such a horror to justice. It did bring the admission of shame, and this of itself was evidence of change. Speaking editorially on September 9, 1930, the News and Observer stated:

The commonwealth of Georgia brought disgrace on itself yesterday and injury to the South when a mob removed a Negro from jail and lynched him. There was even less excuse than in the lynching last month in North Carolina. There is never excuse for a mob to usurp the functions of the lawful processes of justice. The South is shamed.

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., January 9, 1930, p. 15.

### Petty Crimes

The "natural tendency" of Negroes to steal was "understood" by whites and stealing was often the topic for the humor of J. P. Alley's Hambone, e.g., "SOME NIGGUH CLOMB DE FENCE INTER SQUAR HEARD'S WATER-MILYUN PATCH LAS' NIGHT, BUT HE KNOCKED IT DOWN COMIN' OUT!"<sup>65</sup> The same type of humor was often found in the reporting of the News and Observer. The following two articles appeared the same day.

#### COMPELLED TO GIVE UP PANTS Highly Surprised at Demand of Police But Has To Surrender Property

Edenton, Jan. 1.--John Thomas Overton, colored, was naturally hugely surprised when police approached him at a colored church meeting and demanded his pants. The officers collected said pants, too. Of course they let John Thomas Overton go home first and put on another pair.

In recorder's court, the last session of the year, Thomas told of his embarrassment and how he came into possession of the pants. He said he had traded a rifle for them. They were swell pants, with big wide flashy stripes, like you see illustrated in the mail order catalogs, and worth a rifle, John Thomas thought. The trade had been made with another fellow, who in turn had obtained them from Cecil Dillard, who was charged with stealing them from Solomon Ross. That was why Solomon didn't attend the church meeting. Somebody had his pants, his elegant pants that he had left hanging in his room at home.

Cecil admitted that temptation had overcome him when he visited Solomon's room and

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., August 21, 1930, p. 14.

saw the pants and had taken them. So Judge J. F. White sent Cecil to work on the roads in Washington county for three months and meditate on the folly of taking a fellow's swell pair of pants away from him.<sup>66</sup>

#### NEGRO LEAVES WHEN TRUNK IS SEARCHED

Robert Thomas Wasn't Ready to Give Up House,  
But Changed His Mind

Robert Thomas wasn't ready to give up the house, until certain items of his property were unearthed and changed his mind. After that Robert left abruptly and without urging.

Robert, Negro living at 126 W. Cabarrus street, had fallen behind with his rent. The Acme Realty Company desired either the rent or the house. Not accommodated with either, they finally demanded the house, money or no money.

Raleigh Constable Tom Womble went down with civil papers to urge upon Robert the necessity of vacating. Robert wasn't sure that he wanted to leave. So Constable Womble opened a big trunk of Robert's and started piling many and sundry items into it.

But a carefully wrapped, round-looking parcel in the trunk attracted the officer's attention. Investigation revealed several jars of corn liquor. Further investigation revealed that Robert Thomas had already decided to leave--without his belongings.

Robert was later arrested and placed under \$200 bond, for possession of whiskey.<sup>67</sup>

The reaction of the courts to Negroes convicted of petty offenses was unpredictable. Jim Boddie "was sentenced in Edgecombe county in 1922 to serve a life term on a count of second degree burglary" and had his sentence commuted in

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid., January 2, 1930, p. 2.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

1930 by Governor Gardner.<sup>68</sup> In Charlotte a Negro was brought before the city judge for stealing coal.

The judge took a dollar from his pocket, handed it to the Negro and said: 'Take this and get you something to eat.' Others in the courtroom did likewise, and the old darkey went out realizing that justice of the highest kind is neither cold nor cruel.<sup>69</sup>

Justice of the "highest kind" was the exception in 1930.

1955 - Changing Slowly

#### Sex Crimes

The most obvious change in the reporting of the News and Observer from 1930 to 1955 was that article heads no longer clearly identified Negro crimes as such. In most cases, reading of the articles themselves was required to ascertain the race of individuals involved.

By 1955 Negroes were demanding and receiving some "new" rights and black faces were appearing more and more frequently where, previously, only white faces had appeared. Whites were in confusion as to what the Negro's "place" was anymore, but one thing was still certain; any relationship between a white woman and a Negro man was an absolutely tabooed practice, as two articles from the News and Observer clearly show. Frank Dixon, a Negro from Morrisville, North Carolina, was charged with disorderly conduct and resisting

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid., January 10, 1930, p. 17.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., February 4, 1930, p. 4.

arrest as a result of a report that he allegedly tried to date white women clerks at a store in Apex. Fortunately, he was cleared of the charges when the case was heard in the local recorder's court. Bernice Lee Burnette, a Wake County Negro, was not so fortunate. Burnette allegedly made a number of calls to a white woman. The woman, on the advice of law officers, made a date to meet with him and an officer went along, hidden in the car. When the car stopped Burnette reportedly lunged at the woman, the officer raised up and shouted, and Burnette ran. He was captured, charged with attempted assault, tried, convicted and sentenced to from five to seven years. An appeal was made, but the State Supreme Court upheld the ruling.<sup>70</sup>

The "automatic" death sentence for Negroes convicted of rape or attempted rape of white women was no longer in effect. Eddie Lee Leonard, charged with five counts of first degree burglary and two counts of rape, one against a white woman, was tried before an all male jury in Edgecombe County. The jury, made up of nine whites and three Negroes, returned a verdict in twenty-five minutes and Leonard was sentenced to life imprisonment.<sup>71</sup> This seems extreme when compared with the sentence given a Fayetteville white man charged with criminal assault of a white woman. He received a four-year prison term.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup>Ibid., February 3, 1955, p. 9; May 5, 1955, p. 34.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., February 19, 1955, p. 1; June 11, 1955, p. 10.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., September 3, 1955, p. 3.



A Negro who raped a Negro could never be quite sure what the outcome would be. Floyd Willie Morrison was charged with raping a fourteen-year-old Negro girl in June, 1954. The girl signed a warrant for his arrest in February, 1955. She had waited nine months before reporting the incident. Morrison was arrested by a Negro policeman, and held without bond.<sup>73</sup>

On August 3, 1955, the News and Observer reported a crime that had been "unheard of" in North Carolina in 1905 or 1930. "A 22-year-old Columbus County white man was arrested...on a charge of assault with intent to rape a 19-year-old Negro girl...."<sup>74</sup>

Acts of Violence, Other Than Sex Crimes,  
Committed By Negroes Against Negroes

Drinking, gambling, and promiscuous living were still the major causes of violence among Negroes in 1955 according to the reporting of the News and Observer. Three incidents reported in January were typical of the numerous incidents reported during the entire year. The article heads read: "Man Is Fatally Shot Near Here", "Man Is Held for Slaying", and "Three Men Slashed In 'Free-For-All'".<sup>75</sup> In each article the first sentence stated that those involved were Negroes. Two of the incidents took place at Negro "juke joints" and

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid., February 1, 1955, p. 10.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., August 3, 1955, p. 3.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., January 2, 1955, p. 11; January 5, 1955, p. 10; January 19, 1955, p. 12.

the other at a party. All of the articles were short and reported in a matter-of-fact way.

This was not always the case. Sometimes the reporting was colored a bit to give a humorous effect. An affray between Porter Austin and Mary Edwards was reported as follows:

When Porter Austin threatened Mary Edwards with a hawk-bill knife last night, police reported he did not reckon on the 58-year-old woman's batting average.

Officers said she picked up a 'toy' baseball bat and swatted Austin, 37, right into St. Agnes Hospital for treatment of a gash over his left eye that required nine stitches.<sup>76</sup>

Another humorously reported article told of a Negro woman who shot her husband six times and denied that the act had been committed with the intent to kill.<sup>77</sup>

At other times the coloring gave a sinister effect. When Samuel Littles shot George Holt after an argument over a girl the News and Observer reported: "Samuel Littles, Negro, alias Smitty Littles, is being held in the Onslow County jail without privilege of bond...."<sup>78</sup>

Two articles datelined "BEAUFORT, March 17", appeared in the News and Observer on March 18. Both involved the sentencing of young Negro men. Levi Williams was sentenced

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid., January 10, 1955, p. 10.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., January 7, 1955, p. 29.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., February 27, 1955, p. 5.

to from eight to twelve years after being convicted of second degree murder in the killing of Albert Fallio, a nineteen-year-old Negro. Charles Baxter was sentenced to from twenty to thirty years after being convicted of second degree burglary.

Acts of Violence, Other Than Sex Crimes,  
Committed by Negroes Against Whites

Incidents involving violence by Negroes against whites seldom appeared in the News and Observer in 1955. The one highly publicized crime reported was the murder of Mrs. Bertha Cook and her daughter by Richard Scales in Greensboro, in January 1955. Scales was tried and convicted in March and sentenced to die in the gas chamber in July. On July 16 a page one article head read: "Greensboro Slayer Dies." In contrast to reporting in earlier years, only three of nearly a dozen articles about the case which appeared in the News and Observer were printed on page one and these all appeared in July.<sup>79</sup>

On March 2 the News and Observer reported that a Negro man and woman had been arrested and charged with the murder of a white former Charlotte truck driver on Halloween night, 1954. On March 16, under the head "Murderers

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<sup>79</sup>Ibid., January 21, 1955, p. 16; January 23, 1955, p. 13; March 8, 1955, p. 7; March 11, 1955, p. 20; March 12, 1955, p. 5; July 1, 1955, p. 1; July 14, 1955, p. 1; July 16, 1955, p. 1.

Given Terms", it reported that the pair had been tried and convicted of second degree murder. The man was given twenty-eight to thirty years and the woman was given twenty-five to thirty years.

That white law officers still had problems arresting Negroes was evidenced by a front page article in the October 10, 1955 News and Observer. A patrolman was attempting to make an arrest at a Negro tavern. A Negro man attempted to prevent the arrest and the officer struck him with his pistol, critically injuring him. Other Negroes at the tavern reacted violently, firing shots and throwing bricks at the patrolman and a partner who was with him. The officers called for reinforcements and forty-one blacks were arrested and charged with public drunkenness. The somewhat misleading article head read: "Mob Fires Shots, Hurls Bricks at Two Patrolmen; 41 Arrested."

Criminal Acts Committed by Whites  
Against Negroes

The reporting and editorializing of the News and Observer about one case showed the general attitude of the South regarding acts of violence by whites against Negroes, but, at the same time, showed that there were areas where attitudes were unchanged from those prevalent at the turn of the century. On September 1, 1955, the following article appeared on page one:

GREENWOOD, Miss., Aug. 31 (AP) --The weighted body of a 14-year-old Negro boy, kidnaped three days ago because he made

'ugly remarks' to a white woman, was pulled from the Tallahatchie River today.

Emmitt Louis Till, Chicago boy visiting his uncle at nearby Money, died of a bullet wound above the right ear.

#### Murder Kidnaping Charges.

Sheriff George Smith of Leflore County said two white men already charged with kidnapping, would be charged with murder. They are Roy Bryant, Money storekeeper, and his half-brother, J. W. Milam of Glendora.

Sheriff Smith said Bryant admitted taking the boy from his uncle's home but said Till was released unharmed.

Till's mother, Mrs. Mamie Bradley, of Chicago, sobbed: 'Somebody is going to pay for this. The entire State of Mississippi is going to pay for this.'

'I can't think; I Just can't think. I'm frozen. He didn't do anything to deserve that.'

The National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People said Till's death looks like a lynching and demanded vigorous prosecution.

The next day the News and Observer reported that "the Governor of Mississippi...called for a complete investigation of the kidnap-killing of a bubble-gum-chewing Negro youth who allegedly wolf-whistled at a white woman." The woman involved was Bryant's wife.

On September 7 it reported that a grand jury of all white men had indicted Bryant and Milam for the murder of Till. The trial was set for September 20.

An editorial appearing in the News and Observer the day the trial began, headed "The South On Trial," told that Till was crippled and had a speech impediment as a result of polio. The next day the sheriff and a deputy testified that Bryant and Milan had admitted kidnaping the young



Negro but denied killing him. On September 24, a page one article head stated: "Defendants Found Not Guilty In Mississippi Slaying Trial." The same day an editorial appeared headed "Mississippi Shames The South".

The kidnaping charge remained after the defendants had been freed of the murder charge. On October 1 a News and Observer editorial claimed that

Apparently an effort is under way to free the defendants of kidnapping as well as of murder. The outcome of the first trial was determined by unsupported conjecture. The facts should be presented at the second trial.

On October 2 it reported that two Negro witnesses in the Till case had been taken out of the State for safety.

A page one article head on November 10, 1955, read:

Mississippi Case Closed  
Grand Jury Declines To Indict Two White Men For Kidnaping.

Two days later an editorial stated:

This time the record is clear enough for everybody to understand. That record shows that in some counties of Mississippi neither the people nor public officials are interested in punishing white men for crimes against Negroes.

#### Petty Crimes

In 1955 Negroes were still plagued with a "natural" urge to steal, but actions of the courts regarding Negroes convicted of petty offenses were more predictable, almost always being a bit stringent. Convictions on burglary charges always brought long prison sentences - sometimes even

life.<sup>80</sup> In Greenville, North Carolina an eighteen-year-old Negro, convicted of the "larceny of two checks totaling \$14", was sentenced to three years on the roads.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>Ibid., April 6, 1955, p. 32.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., February 22, 1955, p. 3.

## LABOR

## 1905 - The Negro Laborer's Place - ?

A much debated question in North Carolina and throughout the entire South in 1905 was what exactly were the capabilities of Negro laborers and could they profitably be replaced by European immigrants? No matter what was concluded, most whites agreed that the Negro should remain in the South, and determined efforts were made to keep him there. On May 4, the News and Observer reported the arrest of Marshall Freeman, a New Yorker, for inducing laborers to leave Raleigh to accept employment in New York City without having obtained the \$200 license imposed by the Revenue Act. Negro involvement in the violence resulting from a teamsters strike in Chicago was also well covered,<sup>1</sup> possibly to dissuade Negroes from going North.

In June, the News and Observer got word that a Mr. Singleton, a New Jersey millionaire, was planning to construct a mill at Wadesboro to be run by Negroes. A large temporary frame building was to be quickly constructed and spinning machinery installed "for the purpose of instructing colored boys and girls" in order that they might become

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<sup>1</sup>(Raleigh) News and Observer, May 1 - June 15, 1905.

"efficient operatives by the time the mill proper was finished."<sup>2</sup> Most Southerners convinced that Negroes were fit only for the fields, were skeptical of any such philanthropy. On July 7, the following article appeared:

Senator F. M. Simmons in an interview with the Washington representative of the Nashville American is quoted as saying that the scope of the physical and mental efforts of the negro is limited to cotton production. He was speaking on labor conditions in the South and the necessity for European immigrants in this section of the country.<sup>3</sup>

Thomas M. Robertson, in a speech at A. and M. College in Raleigh, voiced the same opinion when he declared that "the negro has been a mill-stone around the neck of industry." He concluded that "any kind of white laborers are better than the negroes. Take the Italian, French, or any other kind if you want just so it is not the Negro."<sup>4</sup> On November 1, an article from the Salisbury Post, reprinted on the editorial page, declared: "We have never believed the negro temperamentally fitted for mill work. It does not harmonize with his inclination of physical development."

In discussing the labor shortage which existed in the South at this time the News and Observer quoted The Manufacturers Record:

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., June 2, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., July 7, 1905, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., October 3, 1905, p. 5.

The pressing need is not due entirely to actual shortage in the number of persons able to work. In many cities hundreds of stalwart male negroes loaf about the streets content to be supported by the earnings and petty piferings of their females.

Many of the males who work at all disappear from their job as soon as they have earned enough to live on for a week....<sup>5</sup>

The North Carolina Department of Labor's statistical report was said to have found that only one county reported Negro labor reliable, ninety-five reported it unreliable, and one reported "no negro labor". The article went on to say that "every county reports labor scarce, and complains of a tendency of the colored population to congregate in the towns seeking easy employment."<sup>6</sup> The common consensus of the average white man as to the unreliability of the Negro is illustrated by this excerpt from a letter to the editor:

Farmers are paying 75 cents to \$1.00 per day and can't get hands at that. It seems the higher the price the less they work. I will give a case that illustrates what I mean: 'If you will hold my horse boy (negro boy or man), while I am making a few purchases I will give you a nickle.' 'All right, Boss.' While the negro was thus engaged he spied a silver dollar laying on the ground; he immediately threw the reins across the horse, leaving his job, saying that he had as much money as he wanted.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., October 6, 1905, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., November 4, 1905, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., November 4, 1905, p. 5.



In May, Governor Glenn spoke at A. and M. College (for Negroes) at Greensboro and advised the Negroes to leave the cities and return to the farms where they really belonged. Following this speech, the News and Observer printed portions of a letter to the Governor from T. W. Thurston, Negro superintendent of a large mill in Fayetteville that employed Negro labor, in which he said of the speech: "I wish that a copy should be placed in the hands of every person in the State. It would establish confidence and contentment and give thousands of industrious hands to the fertile fields of our State."<sup>8</sup> At the opening of the Negro State Fair, Negro leaders were reported to have urged their people to "seize the opportunity" and make themselves "indispensable to the white man, and valuable to the state."<sup>9</sup>

On December 30, an article was run, on page one, the head of which read:

Italians in Dixie

Negro's Future Threatened by Competition.  
Stone Shows That in the Cotton Fields the  
Negro Must be Alive if He would Not be  
Supplanted.

The Negro's only place was thought to be on the farm, but even there he could not feel secure.

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., May 23, 1905, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., Nov. 2, 1905, p. 5.

1930 - "Live at Home" on the Farm

On page one of the editorial section of the Sunday, February 2, 1930 edition of the News and Observer a picture appeared showing a Negro woman with nine children. The caption of the picture read "ONE OF THE BIGGEST PROBLEMS". The article under the picture stated:

Here is a typical case representing the great social problem facing Eastern North Carolina. This Negro woman was a 'cropper' last year in the Ayden section. She made nothing; failed to 'pay out'. This year she cannot get a landlord and supply merchant to furnish credit for another try. With her ten children...they are living in a two-room shack on the outskirts of the town. They haven't a thing in the world and no prospect of getting anything except a bare existence furnished through charity. Families like these are being eliminated from agriculture just as they have been from industry. They present a vital problem.

The article goes on to suggest as a solution to this problem the Governor's "Live at Home" plan which called for crop diversification and widespread introduction of livestock and poultry. No details were given as to how the plan could possibly be instituted.

A report on the "Economic Status of the Negro" prepared by Dr. T. J. Woofter, Jr., of the University of North Carolina, was summarized as follows in a page one report by the News and Observer on October 20, 1930:

While the Negro population in North Carolina cities has shown a tremendous increase within the last decade, the race is handicapped by whites taking away the fields of employment in which it is engaged and by inability to find adequate representation in business life.

The report recommended that Negroes return to or remain on the farms and try more diversified farming. Agricultural education was also recommended for Negroes.

The shortage of jobs for Negroes in 1930 was evidenced in the News and Observer by the large number of advertisements such as the following, which appeared in the "Positions Wanted" section of the "Want Ads":

COLORED MAN COOK, 20 YEARS  
experience, sober, wants job. 118  
Smithfield St., Raleigh.

RELIABLE COLORED WOMAN DE  
sires a job doing general house  
work. 220 Bledsoe avenue.

COLORED GIRL WANTS JOB AS  
cook or maid. Apply after 4 o'clock,  
574 E. Cabarrus St.<sup>10</sup>

COLORED COLLEGE GRADUATE  
with high school A certificate,  
desires position as principal of  
elementary school, or high school  
teacher of English, math, science.  
Phone 2320-R, 1111 Smithfield St.,  
Raleigh.

COLORED MAN CHAUFFEUR AND  
wife, cook, want work together,  
stay on lot. 2613, Joint St.<sup>11</sup>

COLORED GIRL WANTS JOB.  
General house work, stay on lot.  
206 N. State Street.

COLORED WOMAN WANTS JOB.  
Cooking, cleaning. Experienced,  
Good reference. Stay on lot.  
926 E. Hargett Street.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., September 24, 1930, p. 13.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., October 11, 1930, p. 9.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., December 14, 1930, p. 5.

These advertisements also indicate the types of jobs for which Negroes were thought suitable, and the opinion of certain whites as to what was suitable sometimes carried great weight.

Due to financial difficulties the Pullman Company eliminated conductors on certain lines and placed the cars in charge of Negro porters. Senator Overman, of North Carolina, filed a protest with the Southern Railway and Pullman company and several conductors were returned to trains in his home state. The News and Observer reported Overman as stating: "It very often happens that only one, two or three white ladies and children are passengers on these cars and to leave them in full charge and control of the Negro porters would be an outrage to say the least."<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, some Negroes won the "affection" of large numbers of whites by faithfully performing over a long period of time duties deemed suitable for them. The deaths of two such men in February, 1930, were reported as follows:

FAITHFUL JANITOR DIES AT CAROLINA  
George McCauley Served State University  
Students Score of Years  
Chapel Hill, Feb. 6. - 'Uncle' Geo.  
McCauley, faithful University janitor for  
nearly a score of years has passed away.  
News of his death will bring genuine  
sorrow to the hearts of hundreds of former  
Carolina students, for 'Uncle' George was

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., September 26, 1930, p. 11.

a darkey of the old school. He commanded the highest respect of both races.

His mortal remains were laid to rest yesterday afternoon in the cemetery of the Hickory Grove Church of which 'Uncle' George was a life time member. He was 72 years of age.

He had been janitor at the pharmacy building since 1912 and in that capacity had waited on more than 700 pharmacy students, most of whom are now practicing druggists. They remember him as a quiet, unassuming, obliging servant, present always when work was to be done but preferring at other times to efface himself.

'Uncle' George was very religious, not the shouting, fanatic kind but a faithful Baptist who endeavored to practice all the articles of his church's creed. Dr. W. B. MacNider says that he once heard him offer the most beautiful extemporaneous prayer he ever listened to; beautiful in its simple words, earnest tones and quiet hope. He had a great leaning toward lodges, concerning which Dr. MacNider said that he must have belonged to at least eight and he was a leader in the colored community in the educational and religious matters.

In the February 1927 issue of the Carolina Journal of Pharmacy appeared a story of Prof. J. G. Beard entitled 'Uncle George'. 'A man so white all through that I always forget the thin covering of another color.' Thus Prof. Beard speaks of his colored friend. 'Interwoven through the fabric of his nature are honor, gentleness and faithfulness.'

When the North Carolina Pharmaceutical Association met in Greensboro in 1927 one of the local druggists took 'Uncle' George to the meeting. When the old man entered the assembly room all of his former 'boys' crowded around to see and greet him. During the meeting the president called on 'Uncle' George for a few words and he responded in a straightforward and touching way.

Every pharmacy student who has attended the University since 1910 knows and will always remember 'Uncle' George with affection.

Over two years ago the aged colored man caught a severe cold which went into pneumonia



and then into tuberculosis, and then the old fellow's broom and pan saw the last of him. During his illness friends of his made up a fund to carry him through.<sup>14</sup>

#### AGED DUKE JANITOR IS CALLED BEYOND

'Uncle George' Was Known to Many Successive College Classes  
Durham, Feb. 13. - Funeral services were conducted here today for George Wall, colored, for more than a half century a faithful and trustworthy employe of Duke University. 'Uncle George', known to successive generations of Duke students and officials, died Tuesday at his home after several years of declining health.

In the late 70's George, a boundboy to Thomas White, prominent citizen of Randolph county and grandfather of Dr. Charles W. Edwards head of the Duke physics department, was lured by the life of Old Trinity College, and asked Dr. Braxton Craven, its first president for a job. His release was secured from Mr. White, and from that time until his death George Wall knew no service but that to the institution.

When Trinity was moved to Durham in 1892 George followed, and continued to set a record of faithfulness and devotion. Pensioned for the past several years by the university, and relieved of all responsibility, Uncle George insisted nevertheless in going about the campus to do such tasks as he was able.

George Wall was one of the well known colored residents of Durham. The colored settlement in the northwest section of the city for years has been known as 'Walltown' and a 'Wall Street' also commemorates the memory of Duke's faithful employee.<sup>15</sup>

Two articles which appeared in the News and Observer in early January, 1930, showed labor unions making an attempt to organize Negroes. However, the underlying motive for the organizing attempts was to prevent the use of Negroes

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., February 7, 1930, p. 5.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., February 14, 1930, p. 12.

as strike breakers. H. B. Grainger, who had visited the Charlotte headquarters of the National Textile Workers Union, was quoted as saying that "...the Negroes were especially asked to join the union so that the white mill men could not employ them if the white mill workers walked out...."<sup>16</sup> President William Green, of the American Federation of Labor, in urging Negroes to join the Federation, stated: "No group or race can win permanent advantage by taking unfair advantage, by exploitation or undercutting standards. Through union organization the Negro can... raise his standards, and the American Federation stands ready to help."<sup>17</sup>

A favorite topic of J. P. Alley's "Hambone" in 1930 was Negro labor, and he clearly promoted the stereotype of the shiftless, lazy black, ready at any moment to take advantage of the generosity of the "boss".

I RECK'N HIT'S ALL RIGHT BOUT BOSS AIN'  
NEVUH RAISE MAH WAGES, CA'SE HE'D JES  
NACH'LY SPEC' TOO MUCH UV ME DEN!

BOSS MAD BOUT ME LOAFIN' ROUN' EN AIN'  
DO MAH WORK, BUT SHUCKS! HE BIN SO  
'STRACTED HEAH LATELY HE AIN' HAD TIME  
TO ORDER ME ROUN'!!!

MOS' O' DIS HEAH FIGHTIN' G-WINE ON  
BOUT 'ON-EMPLOYMINT, HIT'S JES' STEERED  
UP BY NACH'UL - BAWN LOAFERS!

--DEY SAYS EF YOU KEEPS HAHD AT WORK  
YOU GWINE FERGIT YO' WORRIES, BUT  
SHUCKS! I'D JES' SOON WORRY!!

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., January 7, 1930, p. 8.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., January 2, 1930, p. 3.

OLE TOM FIGGUH HE'S HAID O' DE GAME  
 --- HE IN HEAVY DEBT TO HE BOSS, EN  
 HE COTTON CRAP DONE FAIL!

I'SE GOT A GOOD NAME MONGS' DE WHITE  
 FOLKS BUT I WUSH DEY'D REC'MEND ME  
 FUH SUM'N 'SIDES WORK!!!

BOSS LOW I BETTUH SAVE UP MAH MONEY  
 FUH DE NEED-CESSITIES DIS WINTUH,  
 BUT SHUCKS! - I<sup>18</sup>KIN GIT NEED CESSITIES  
 ON DE CREDICK!

Unemployment among Negroes in Eastern North Carolina by early 1930 was one of the biggest problems facing the state. In Kinston the city council started a relief fund for Negroes, explaining that "conditions among Negroes are far worse than among whites throughout the district."<sup>19</sup> However, in most cases relief for suffering, destitute Negroes came from those of their own race. In Goldsboro and Wayne County Negroes started a Community Chest from which they took funds to provide free meals for "those in actual need of food." Teachers at the East End Colored School in Goldsboro contributed funds from their own salaries to provide breakfast for fifteen very needy children.<sup>20</sup> In Wilson, Negroes, at a mass meeting, raised over \$200 for the "relief of the destitute of their race."<sup>21</sup> In Raleigh the Scruggs Medical Society, a Negro organization concerned

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., January, 10, 1930, p. 16; February 18, 1930, p. 14; April 1, 1930, p. 14; June 4, 1930, p. 3; June 26, 1930, p. 14; September 6, 1930, p. 12; November 19, 1930, p. 16.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., February 6, 1930, p. 8.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., January 19, 1930, p. 8; January 25, 1930, p. 8.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., January 29, 1930, p. 11.

with welfare and health work, considered the unemployment problem and determined "to do what it could to help the most deserving."<sup>22</sup>

"Live at home" on the farm was a pleasant idea, but only that - not a solution to the problem.

#### 1955 - Slow Escape

In June, 1955 a review of Samuel R. Spencer's book, Booker T. Washington, appeared in the News and Observer. The review, by Harry Golden, was headed: "Booker T. Washington: For Slaves, He Built Escape Scaffolding." A part of the review read as follows:

If the defeated men of Munich had not also corrupted a perfectly honorable word of the English language, we could do full justice to Booker T. Washington by calling him 'The Great Appeaser' in the history of race relations of the South. He literally scratched the earth with his bare hands to build the scaffolding from which developed an economic and intellectual advancement without parallel among people who had been subjected to slavery.<sup>23</sup>

The economic and intellectual advancement of the American Negro was without parallel among people who had been subjected to slavery, but escape from oppression was slow. Many gains made after 1930 were lost in the wave of repression which swept the South following the May 17, 1954

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., March 8, 1930, p. 12.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., June 5, 1955, p. 5.

Supreme Court Decision regarding public education. In 1955 a bill was introduced in the Florida Legislature which, if passed, would have made it illegal for Negro barbers to cut the hair of whites. The News and Observer attacked the bill editorially saying:

Even those who most strongly defend segregation will not approve laws to push Negroes out of jobs in which, in the oldest traditions of the South, they long served well and pleased white Southerners.<sup>24</sup>

An obvious change in the position of Negroes in North Carolina between 1930 and 1955 was evidenced in the News and Observer when the following letter to the editor appeared under the head "Negro Employment":

I think it is time for Mr. Hodges and the rest of our leaders of North Carolina to wake up and realize that the old order is changing rapidly and the new Negro will not cease the fight until he has gotten first class citizenship.

The Governor said in his speech that North Carolina employed more Negro teachers than seven northern states; but he did not tell us that these seven northern states employed twice as many Negroes in other capacities in the State Government and public affairs as North Carolina.

If North Carolina employed people on qualifications rather than race, many of our school teachers would be in other departments of our State Government. The Governor should give us the figures on the number of Negroes who work in State Government above the level of porters and maids, and compare these figures with the seven northern states mentioned.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., June 5, 1955, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., September 2, 1955, p. 4.



The old order was changing, as the publishing of this letter showed, but not as rapidly as the letter indicated. Faithful blacks who knew their "place" were still most likely to receive the praise of white men. In January, 1955, a picture of Jessie Bridges appeared in the News and Observer with an article headed, "Travels of a Tray Man." Jessie had been working for thirteen years as a "delivery boy" at the Capital Club Soda Shop. His bosses were quoted as saying, "He's a hard worker. Never says much."<sup>26</sup>

The "Want Ads" in the News and Observer were further evidence that the old order was still strong. Only certain kinds of jobs were available for Negroes and these were available in limited numbers. The advertisements for "colored" in the "Help Wanted" section were always far less than the number by "colored" in the "Positions Wanted" section. On January 4, 1955, the ads read:

Male Help Wanted

COLORED porter, part time work. Butler's shoe store, 138 Fayetteville St.

Positions Wanted

COLORED practical nurse desires nursing or housekeeping. References. Phone 2-3602

COLORED woman desires nursing or house cleaning 5 days a week. Phone 3-6215.

COLORED lady wants housework, 5 days. Can cook. Phone 4-5419

COLORED lady desires full time job. Phone 4-1132.

COLORED girl desires a job. Housework, cooking. 7-2:30. Phone 4-1138

COLORED girl desires job housecleaning. Phone 2-2486

COLORED girl desires housework, cleaning, cooking. Call 4-2818

On May 3, 1955, there were only "Positions Wanted:"

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., January 27, 1955, p. 28.

COLORED girl desires housecleaning 9 to 1.  
 Dial 4-3378 before 12 a.m.  
 COLORED girl desires housework, child's  
 care. Full time. References. 3-7261.  
 COLORED girl desires nursing, maid or  
 day work. Dial 3-5750.  
 COLORED high school girl desires job. No  
 cooking. Dial 3132.  
 COLORED woman desires day work, full or  
 part time. Dial 3-5706  
 COLORED man desires job as truck driver,  
 local or distant. 3-7492.

There was however, one area in which Negroes made considerable gain by 1955 - professional sports. In 1930 the only black professional athletes mentioned in the News and Observer were prize fighters of whom Jack Johnson was the most prominent. By 1955 the color barrier had been broken in all three major spectator sports - baseball, basketball, and football - and blacks were dominating boxing. On January 5, Sugar Ray Robinson started one of many come-backs during his boxing career by flattening Joe Rindone; January 7, Floyd Patterson defeated Troy by a technical knockout; May 2, Archie Moore won a decision over Valdes in Las Vegas and on June 22, Moore knocked out Bobo Olson in the third round in New York.<sup>27</sup> In basketball Bill Russell was named to the All American Team and headed for the pros while Wilt "the Stilt" Chamberlain was finishing high school and choosing a college under the watchful eyes of every professional team.<sup>28</sup> In baseball Jackie Robinson signed with

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., January 6, 1955, p. 20; January 8, 1955, p. 10; May 3, 1955, p. 14; June 23, 1955, p. 21.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., March 3, 1955, p. 22; February 9, 1955, p. 20.

Brooklyn for nearly \$40,000, and Chicago's Sam Jones became the first Negro to hurl a no-hitter in the major leagues.<sup>29</sup>

Along with reports of these accomplishments, there appeared in the sports section of the News and Observer two curious articles. On February 12, 1955, the following appeared:

Flunks Out

STATE COLLEGE, Pa., Feb. 11 (AP) -- Lenny Moore, brilliant Penn State Negro halfback and a third team All-American choice last season, has been dropped from Penn State University for 'unsatisfactory scholarship.'

What makes this article stand out is the absence of other such articles regarding other athletes who failed academically. The other unusual article was headed, "Giants Figured Mays Safer In Puerto Rico Than Harlem". The article stated that "...it was decided that Mays was safer in more ways than one, playing baseball in Puerto Rico than he would be in Harlem or even Birmingham." The supposed inability of Willie Mays, the New York Giants star centerfielder, to care for himself or his money was prefaced by the remark that his "...genius begins and ends in center field, at bat and on the bases...."<sup>30</sup>

The old order was changing slowly but it could never be fully changed as long as the idea of the intellectual superiority of the white man was maintained. It was still very much alive in 1955.

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., January 14, 1955, p. 20; May 13, 1955, p. 21.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., January 16, 1950, p. 4.

## RELIGION

## 1905 - The Negro and The Church

Excerpts from speeches by a number of Southern Presbyterians meeting at Red Springs, North Carolina, were carried on page one of the October 23 edition of the News and Observer. The topic of discussion was the Church's duty to the Negro race. Mr. P. A. H. Gwynn, of Steel Creek, maintained that "if Christianization will not solve this problem (the race problem in general) there is nothing else to do with the black man." Elder J. H. Currie, an ex-Confederate soldier from Cumberland County, stated:

The negro is here to stay. He is the best servant we ever had or ever will have, and that was what he was made for. We have lost a quarter of a century so far as the negro is concerned, and are just now taking up a work that should have been begun in 1865. We are the best friends of a negro, and the South is his home. As an evidence of this there is not a Southern State that would emulate the example of the Illinois Governor who would have ordered out the State militia to prevent negro strike breakers from entering that State. The Presbyterians who have always stood in the forefront of civilization can solve this question. I hope this Synod will do unanimously all it can for the elevation, education and christianization of the negro.

Dr. C. G. Vardell, president of the Southern Presbyterian College and Conservatory of Music, in telling of a speech he made to a Negro congregation, said:

...I told them...that they owe all they have been, and are to be to God and the Southern

white men. I told them that they were far below the moral standard and that their state of morals was simply abhorrent. I told them they were liars, but we were the truthful men, I told them they were dishonest, but that we were honest, and I told them that we were virtuous but they were not. I told them that if they listen to what their negro speakers tell them they will get into trouble, but that if they listened to what the white people said to them they would keep out of trouble.

Rev. D. I. Claig said that

The white minister must teach the negroes, but the custom of permitting the negroes to attend the white man's church is abolished forever, and the negro must learn that there is an insurmountable barrier before the white man which the colored man can never pass.

The Northern Presbyterian Church had been actively working among Southern Negroes from the end of the Civil War, whereas the Southern Presbyterians supported mission work among the Negroes in Africa.<sup>2</sup> But even in the North racial prejudice was increasing. On April 14, the News and Observer reported that the days of integration in the Northern Presbyteries were numbered.<sup>3</sup> On May 23 it reported that separate Presbyteries had been set up for blacks and foreigners and that union between the Northern and Southern churches was under discussion.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>(Raleigh), News and Observer, October 28, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., March 31, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., April 14, 1905, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., May 23, 1905, p. 1.



The Southern Baptists were more evasive. They proposed to leave the race problem to God, confident that He would resolve it. They did conclude, however, that "by far the greatest force in leading the negro up from savagery had been his varied contact with Christian white men and women."<sup>5</sup>

Some blacks were as alarmed at the unChristian character of their brothers as the whites were. In June, Reverend J. A. Davis, D. D., a colored presiding elder, delivered a sermon to a congregation of over 2,000 Negroes in Atlanta. The News and Observer quoted him as follows:

The negro is a lawless character, without rule in the home, therefore he can have but little in his church and society. His respect for law and order comes from a sense of fear. He does right either from fear of punishment or hope of reward.

I need not say there are exceptions: I need not say there are good men and women in this race, but they are in the hopeless minority. This is not being seen in the city of Atlanta but anywhere you meet this reckless, independent, know-all young negro that neither respects the rights of men on earth nor the authority of God in Heaven.

This is my thirtieth year as a preacher. I am 61 years old. My word for it, I have seen both the old and the new negro. The tactics and the procedure of the new negro is destroying him. His reckless disregard for moral purity, a disposition to ignore the church and the gospel, a love for a life of ease and pleasure, ignorant and malicious disregard for the law of God and rights of men that is daily being practiced

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., May 14, 1905, p. 9.

by the majority of the race convince me beyond doubt 'that the negro is a lawless being, and he is a liar if he says he is not.'

The negro preacher must countenance wrong living, wrong action and almost endorse crime to be permitted to preach to this new negro. For in the majority of cases it is pecuniary consideration, it is what will become of me if the people object to what I say, and if the presiding elder and bishop do not endorse my position, and too often he preaches because it's the biggest thing he can do, and do the lease work that pays. Fully one-half of the negro preachers should be out upon the farms where they can best serve the people in their day and generation.

The church is ruined with drunkards and debased characters who live in bar rooms and sneak up and down alleys and streets all night, and come into the church and take the front seats.

Good women and men must take a back seat that these scoundrels and strumpets may air their vice and shame in the eyes of the public.

Too often the amen corners are a party to this shame and disgrace.

All honor to the grand men and women who are pushing forward the work of Christian education, but education without character and those essentials that make people upright and good make the bad a more formidable foe than ever.

A decent preacher is denounced if he attempts to advise and instruct as it relates to the inner life and purity in the life and thought of men.

It is not the white man's prejudice, lynchings or mistreatment of the negro that will destroy him half as fast as his bad conduct and habits and love of immorality.<sup>6</sup>

Two days after this article was printed, another observed that "In Raleigh we know that the type is higher

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., June 22, 1905, p. 3.

than he [Rev. Davis] pictures in Atlanta, though there are too many of the younger negroes in need of his Admonitions." The piece went on to praise a Negro Baptist church in Tarboro which had dismissed its pastor for having written a "reprehensible letter to a young woman."<sup>7</sup> During the year the News and Observer spoke favorably of most colored religious endeavors and even spoke favorably of the mission work by Northern white churches among Southern Negroes.<sup>8</sup>

Christianization of the Negro was thought to improve his character and teach him to accept his "place" in the white man's world, for it meant complete and cheerful acceptance of the subordinate position given by God to the black race. The white man's Christianity became another form of Uncle-Tomism to the Negro.

#### 1930 - Looking to the Past

In 1930 Southern whites were more apt to expend their energies looking back in an effort to justify the past than in looking at the present in an effort to improve what was then existing or to the future in an effort to plan a better life for all peoples of the South. In April, 1930, an article by Joseph Lacy Seawell titled

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., June 24, 1905, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., January 1 - December 31, 1905.

"FORGOTTEN DAYS OF THE OLD SOUTH" appeared in the News and Observer. The following excerpt from the article explains how white slave owners were really "the greatest missionaries of modern times."

Negro slavery was unconsonant with Americanism, but it was not per se a sin. It was not malum in se.... Slavery was proscribed by New England saints but never by Christ or Jehovah Himself!

Slavery was the salvation of the Negro race in America! The Negroes sold into slavery in America had been bought while in actual slavery, or its equivalent, in Africa; some were de facto slaves, some were captives in predatory wars of their countrymen, some were actually stolen from their homes. Instead of dying in savagery they were mercifully brought to America and civilized and christianized by Southern planters. What boon would have accrued to these African savages had they remained in their native land or been freed immediately upon arriving in America? The American Indians were never less civilized than were the enslaved Africans brought to America. What blessings has freedom brought to the Indians, who were never serfs?

The greatest missionary of modern times was the typical slave owner of the Southern States, as distinguished from the 'slave driver' and slave dealer. The latter was abhorred and ostracized by the gentility of the South.

The Southern slave owner lifted his slave to heights the slave could never attain in his savage home. Every Negro slave brought to America was a heathen and a savage. The ultimate religious propensities of the Southern slave are proverbial; the Negro race is notoriously religious; to it atheism and agnosticism are unknown. Negro 'spirituals' conceived by Negroes well nigh a century ago continue to charm, inspire and delight.

The greatest missionary of modern times was beset and bedeviled by a sect more merciless, fanatical and ruthless than its contemporary cohorts and disciples of Mohammed,

Buddha and Confucius. This sect comprised fanatical abolitionists and Stevensonian reconstructionists - dual progenitors of John Brown of Osawatomie, the rapist lyncher and the ballyhooing political bully of the South. This presentment is made advisedly. It is neither unjust nor ultra severe. It is in legal parlance 'a true bill' and cannot be mitigated, quashed or annuled in the court of impartial public opinion.

Slow but splendid days were those of the Old South - glorified by charity, generosity of a Christian gentry and the immaculate purity of its purpose for the betterment of a servile race.<sup>9</sup>

Some members of both races were conscious of the race problem in North Carolina in 1930. In March the Church Relations committee of the North Carolina Commission on Inter-Racial Cooperation conducted a full day's session at Christ Church parrrish house in Raleigh.<sup>10</sup> In August an Associated Press report from the Methodist Conference at Lake Junaluska was headlined

METHODISTS RAP RACE PREJUDICE  
Persons Who Stir Up Hatred Branded by  
Assembly as Demagogues.<sup>11</sup>

On the same day Dr. E. C. Peters, president of Paine College in Augusta, Georgia, while pleading for "Christians to look through the eyes of the Negro at the inequalities which are

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., April 6, 1930, p. 6.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., March 2, 1930, p. 6.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., August 6, 1930, p. 2.



his lot", presented a resolution calling upon citizens and governors to do their "utmost to prevent lynchings" and in case of mob violence to "bring the perpetrators to justice."<sup>12</sup> This type of understanding and cooperation was the exception, not the rule.

The fact that Negro churches were relatively independent of white control made them suspect to most whites. J. P. Alley's versatile "Hambone" humorously confirmed the suspicions of most whites regarding Negro preachers and their churches.

W'EN WHITE FOLKS GITS ON-EASY BOUT MONEY  
WORRIES DEY STAHTS TO PRAYIN', BUT A  
NIGGUH, HE STAHTS TO PREACHIN'!!

MISTIS WANTER KNOW WUZ DAT CHU'CH  
SOCIABLE A SUC-CESS BUT ALL I KNOWS  
IS, I WINT IN DAH WID FO' DOLLAHS  
EN COME OUT BY MAH-SE'F!!!<sup>13</sup>

On February 15, 1930, the following article appeared on page three of the News and Observer:

#### ULTIMATUM HANDED TO COLORED MINISTER

Jones Congregation Thinks Preacher Should Have More Than One Sermon.  
Kinston, Feb. 14. - The quite Rev. Thomas Z. Smith has to learn a new sermon. An ultimatum has been handed him by a Jones county colored congregation. 'Next time Bro. Smith admonishes us we shall expect something different in the sermon,' the warning from the elders said, errors in spelling being omitted. 'He has preached the same "discuss" at the last seven quarterly meetings.'

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., May 9, 1930, p. 20; March 19, 1930, p. 18.

The article explained that Rev. Smith, who could not read or write, had learned the one sermon from a white preacher.

Rev. T. W. Thurston, a lieutenant of Booker T. Washington, was one Negro preacher who was able to win the favor and cooperation of a large segment of the white population. Thurston had had a letter to Governor Glenn, praising a speech made by the Governor, published in the News and Observer in 1905. At that time he was superintendent of a large mill in Fayetteville. On January 5, 1930, on page eight of the News and Observer, a half page story by Gertrude Carraway told of the success and popularity of Thurston.

Negro welfare work is proving highly successful in the only Negro colony of the kind in the state, mainly through the efforts of Rev. T. W. Thurston, Pennsylvania Negro, who made such a splendid record during his two years as pastor of Jones chapel that he has recently been made presiding elder of the New Bern district of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion church, at the request of white and colored citizens of New Bern.

Many of the most prominent white citizens of New Bern signed the petition to the Methodist bishop to make Thurston district presiding elder, so that he could extend his welfare endeavors among the 60,000 Negroes in this section. The petition in part read as follows:

'This divine has distinguished himself in our country, as an active and energetic factor along moral, civic and educational lines. He has been instrumental in furthering the welfare work, sanitary improvement, church building and moral and spiritual uplift of his people.'

He believes in the Live-at-Home doctrine and has been preaching it for some months....

The Negro preacher came to this section 25 months ago as pastor of Jones chapel. At that time the church was unfinished. The small village of Meadowsville was dirty, dark, and muddy. There seemed to be no cooperation among the Negroes and rare contact with white New Bernians.

.....  
The small village of Meadowsville now presents an entirely different appearance, with its corner lights, new roads, sanitary conditions and completed church. There are new life and industry in the inhabitants, who work together wonderfully well under Thurston's leadership.

.....  
Vocational training in schools is urged for Negroes by Thurston. This is more important than educating colored boys and girls for college, because they then go north, he says. Young Negroes can not cook so well as the older generation. They should learn to become better cooks, seamstresses, wash-women, farmers and laborers.

.....  
Charity is not desired for the Negroes. Thurston is anxious for his people to learn to help themselves. Leadership and encouragement are all that are asked of white citizens. A charitable attitude is the main thing wanted, he emphasizes.

'The salvation of the Negro race lies in moral worth and labor,' says the preacher. 'We can save a working people but not an idle one. The values of work and economy are among the most needed lessons for our colored citizens. I find that most Negroes will work but they must be encouraged to do so by working leaders. Our greatest need is for able leaders.

'For years we Negroes have been told to be like white folks. That would be all right, if our civilization were as high as theirs. But white civilization is 2,000 years in advance of ours. This should be remembered by both whites and negroes. We must start our structure from the ground up.

'It is almost impossible and certainly unwise for us to try to be like white folks. We are inherently different. Our civilizations

are different. There is a different soul expression in every group. I think we should try to be the best colored men and women possible. The main things needed by Negroes are steady industry, more dependable characters and higher concepts of moral life.'

The minister is a well-educated and highly-cultivated member of his race. He is a dignified diplomat and has never once overstepped the bounds of propriety. White citizens admire him very much....

The Negro, 52 years old, is a scholar and philosopher, who knows humanity, loves the Bible and understands the relations of whites and Negroes. He has the courtesy of a Chesterfield.

If all blacks could have been the "Christian gentleman" that Thurston was and accepted the teaching of the white supremists, as he did, there would have been no race problem in 1930.

#### 1955 - Integration: Now, Later, or Never?

The May 17, 1954<sup>14</sup> Supreme Court decision regarding public school segregation forced the race question to the forefront in areas other than education. The lack of unity among church groups was quickly evidenced. In January, 1955, the Methodist student group on campus at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill went on record supporting the Supreme Court ruling on segregation.<sup>14</sup> On June 1, 1955, the News and Observer reported on page one that Methodist

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., January 21, 1955, p. 15.

students meeting at Lake Junaluska had gone on record as "opposing all forms of racial discrimination and pledging their support of the Supreme Court's decision on segregation." The College of Bishops of the Methodist Southeastern Jurisdiction had, however, in February, issued a statement defending the retention of racial division within the church's administrative system.<sup>15</sup> The day after this decision a Methodist woman leader, Miss Thelma Stevens of New York, speaking in Charlotte, decried "barriers within the church that keep any race from being a part of the Christian fellowship."<sup>16</sup> On July 1, 1955, the News and Observer reported on page one that an amendment which had passed the North Carolina Methodist Conference, if accepted by the Methodist General Conference, would delay integration in Methodism until 1960. Rev. H. A. Bizzell, who offered the amendment, said: "The thinking behind this amendment and memorial is this: that we need to move and yet we do not need to do something that will tear up our churches." Rev. W. A. Cade, of Raleigh, stated: "We must be mindful and respectful of sacred covenants, but I think the amendment meets the need for change wisely." B. I. Satterfield, of Roxboro, a layman at the Conference and a member of the North Carolina General Assembly was quoted by

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., February 3, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., February 4, 1955, p. 6.



the News and Observer as follows:

He said he believed in the Golden Rule, in friendly relations between the Negro and white races and in equal opportunities for both races. 'But I believe that both races should maintain their integrity.... The breaking down of segregation in churches and schools can have but one result--a mongrel race.... I believe we should give the matter careful consideration.<sup>17</sup>

On March 8, 1955, the News and Observer stated that Rev. S. R. Johnson, Jr., a Negro Baptist minister, "...said today that Negroes 'by the thousands' resent the views of the state president of the NAACP, who has called for the immediate end of all segregation." Ten days later the following letter was printed in "The People's Forum".

To the Editor: Contrary to the views expressed by the Rev. S. R. Johnson of Salisbury, Kelly M. Alexander of Charlotte, president of the State Conference of the NAACP, does express the true sentiments of the emancipated Negroes of North Carolina and America is calling for the abolition of all racial segregation laws in North Carolina.

The Rev. Mr. Johnson's views represent the small segment of the Negro race still living in antebellum days.

Not only are free Negroes opposed to segregation but true Christians object to the system because of its violation of teaching of Christ on Christian brotherhood.

It is indeed unfortunate that political leaders in the South are capitalizing on statements from Negroes who are still under the shackles of slavery - Negroes whose employment or security prevent them from speaking their sentiments. No white leader can accurately say what Negroes do or do not want as long as his association is on a lord-to-servant level.

As for social intermingling, it has gone on in America between races since 1600. Using

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., July 1, 1955, p. 16.

the words of President Benjamin E. Mays, president of Morehouse College, Atlanta, Ga., 'It is mighty late in the day to think about races mixing.'

On December 6, 1955, a page one article head read: "Franklin County Negro 'Bounced' Out of Church." A seventy-one year old Negro woman, a former Shaw University teacher, walked four miles, alone, to a white Baptist church to tell the pastor that the church's welcome sign placed near her house had been knocked down. There was no usher at the door when she arrived and the service was in progress so she decided to stay and tell the pastor about the sign after the service. After the service she was pushed out of the church by a young white man and ordered off the church property by the preacher.

In January of 1955 the Southern Presbyterian Church rejected a proposal to merge with the Northern branch. In June the Southern branch voted 293 to 109 to reaffirm their church's denunciation of enforced racial segregation - an action taken shortly after the Supreme Court's historic 1954 decision.<sup>18</sup>

On October 9, 1955, the News and Observer attacked editorially what it called "a new belligerency in intolerance in Mississippi." A mass meeting had been held in Durant, a small Mississippi town, for the purpose of inviting two whites, who were trying to help poor whites and blacks, to leave. On November 21 a front page article head read:

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., January 19, 1955, p. 1; June 8, 1955, p. 1.

# MINISTER FACES OUSTER REQUEST

Mississippi Flock Charges Him With Getting  
Into Segregation Politics  
Durant, Miss., Nov. 20 (AP) --

At the mass meeting held to discuss the two men who were accused of advocating racial integration and to ask them to leave town, the minister of the Durant Presbyterian Church asked: "What legal or moral right do you have to hold such a meeting as this?" As a result of this incident the congregation voted unanimously to request the ouster of the minister.

However, change was coming in North Carolina. In April the 73rd annual convention of the central North Carolina Episcopal Woman's Auxiliary, meeting at the Chapel of the Cross in Chapel Hill, approved a resolution calling for "an eventual, orderly transition to an integrated public school system in the Diocese of North Carolina."<sup>19</sup> And when Janie Green Wood, A Negro high school junior of Winston Salem, was elected president of the Y Teen Conference held at the Raleigh Y W C A, the News and Observer reported that "a non-segregated banquet was a highlight of the meeting."<sup>20</sup>

The church world in the South in 1955 was little different from the secular world in the realm of race relations. Opinions on integration ran the gamut from "now" to "later" to "never".

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., April 21, 1955, p. 10.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., February 1, 1955, p. 20.

## IN RETROSPECT

## Politics

According to white supremacists the Negro was made subordinate to the white man because of his genetic inferiority; yet, the whole Jim Crow system was elaborately designed to prevent the Negro from becoming the white man's equal, which according to the racist Southerner's own argument would have been impossible.

Illogical reasoning was hardly an obstacle for dedicated white supremacists at the turn of the century. As I. A. Newby has said, "Racists accepted the Negro's alleged inferiority as self-evident and, thus, gave him no credit for political ability or potential."<sup>1</sup> In 1905 Negro disfranchisement was viewed by most Southern whites as a positive good, not only for them but for the Negro also. It protected the Negro from scheming white politicians. By 1905 disfranchisement had so removed blacks from politics that the whole matter was newsworthy only as it related to the other states and as it was accepted in the North.

By 1930 the Negro was a factor to be reckoned with in national politics. And, in North Carolina many blacks

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<sup>1</sup>Newby, Jim Crow's Defense: Anti-Negro Thought in America, 1900-1930, p. 146.

had the audacity to register as Democrats in an effort to participate in the State primary. Meanwhile, in South Carolina, Senator Blease, campaigning for re-election, was publicly advocating lynch law for rapists. Editorially, the News and Observer took a progressive racist stance - adhering to political discrimination against Negroes but abhorring the brand of racism which advocated mob murder.

In 1955, due to the 1954 Supreme Court ruling on public school segregation, integration was the issue politically. One writer said it was this way:

While the people and officials of some Southern states vigorously searched for a way to mix the races in their schools, others searched with greater diligence for a way to keep the races apart. The scale was never balanced for popular sentiment kept the force pointed in the direction of the old tradition.<sup>2</sup>

In the same vein, Harry S. Ashmore wrote in 1954: "The South fought on every legal front to preserve the white primary - which was the historic device for disfranchising the Negro - just as it is now battling to maintain segregated public schools."<sup>3</sup>

After the 1954 Supreme Court decision was made it became apparent that the responsibility for protecting

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<sup>2</sup>Henry Allen Bullock, A History of Negro Education in the South From 1619 to the Present (New York: Praeger Publisher, 1967) p. 250.

<sup>3</sup>Harry S. Ashmore, The Negro and the Schools (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1954) p. 130.



the traditional customs of the South regarding race relations would fall on the shoulders of the politicians - men whose cunning could at least delay execution of the Court action. Yet, the only real long term hope for the South was that Negroes would be "reasonable" enough to remain voluntarily segregated.

### Education

The lack of consensus among Southerners in 1905, as to the advisability of educating Negroes is quite clear. The lack of logic in their arguments is even clearer. Josephus Daniels, and others of the more progressive element in Southern society, actively supported Negro education. At the other end of the educational spectrum was the likes of Thomas Dixon, Jr., fearing even Booker T. Washington's brand of education for his race. Somewhere between the two were the majority of Southern whites: accepting readily the idea that Negroes were a thousand years behind the white race, yet fearing an immediate rise of the Negro from his place of subordination to one of equality, as a result of his learning.

The solution to this problem was to provide for Negroes a "special" education that would prepare them for their "place" in society. After all, the inherently inferior blacks could not be changed by any "amount of the white man's 'higher education'." Whites pictured an

"educated" Negro, as Booker T. Washington said, "with a high hat, imitation gold eye-glasses, a showy walking-stick, kid gloves, fancy boots, and what not--in a word a man who was determined to live by his wits."<sup>4</sup> Agricultural training, it was assumed, was ideally suited for the intellectually deficient black race.

The separate and unequal educational system of North Carolina was considered, in 1930, to be the final solution. Not only were Negroes learning their "place", but those with some learning were not as apt to end up in jail. Also, the dual system of public education was cheaper than one good system. With short terms, lower teachers' salaries, and Northern philanthropists providing financial aid, Negro education was quite inexpensive.

The Supreme Court decision on May 17, 1954 ruined the South's "final solution" to the Negro question, but in 1955 Southern whites were still hoping that Negroes had learned their "place" well enough that they would remain where they were. After all, no one could really expect white parents to allow their children to attend school with Negroes. And even if the Supreme Court did, "reasonable" Negroes did not. So reasoned the South.

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<sup>4</sup> Booker T. Washington, Up From Slavery in Three Negro Classics (New York: Avon Books, 1965) p. 92.

## Crime and Punishment

As an operation of the mind, race-thinking rests on abstraction - singling out certain traits that are observed, accurately or not, in one or more individuals, and making of these traits a composite character which is then assumed to be uniform, or at least prevailing, throughout the group.<sup>5</sup>

"Race thinking", as defined here by Barzun, was universal in the South in 1905 and, although there was some change, was still characteristic of the majority of Southerners half a century later. This was in no place more clearly illustrated than in the reporting of crimes and court actions by the News and Observer.

C. Vann Woodward, speaking of the South in the 1890's, said: "Race violence there was, undoubtedly, but it was only a part of the general milieu of Southern violence and can be understood best against that background."<sup>6</sup> This statement holds true for 1905 and 1930, and, to a lesser degree, for 1955. However, reactions to the violence of the South, by the general public and by the courts, were clearly racist.

Between 1905 and 1955 social consciousness was fully awakened among the "best people" of the South, but because

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<sup>5</sup>Jacques Barzun, Race: A Study in Superstition (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1965) pp. ix-x.

<sup>6</sup>Woodward, Origins of the New South, 1877-1913. pp. 159-60.

the majority of common people remained steeped in superstition, true judicial equality was little closer in 1955 than it had been at the turn of the century. Conditions were still much as they had been in the 1940's when Arnold Rose wrote: "Negroes are more likely to be arrested than are whites, more likely to be indicted after arrest, and more likely to be convicted in court and punished more heavily."<sup>7</sup> George M. Fredrickson, writing of Albion Tourgee, said: "Tourgee...was no naive believer that the appeal to law was...sufficient to reverse the tide of racism."<sup>8</sup> Half a century after the death of Tourgee "the appeal to law" was still insufficient to turn back the relentless tide of racism.

#### Labor

In 1905 Negroes were considered to be fit only to labor in the fields and were encouraged to leave the cities and return to the farms. At the same time they were criticized for their laziness, and their replacement by Europeans was threatened; yet extreme measures were taken to keep them in the South. These inconsistencies illustrate

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<sup>7</sup> Arnold Rose, The Negro in America (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1948) p. 304.

<sup>8</sup> Albion W. Tourgee, A Fool's Errand (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1961) pp. xx, xxi.

the lack of concensus among Southern whites as to what the Negro's "place" really was. Ray Stannard Baker explained this phenomenon in 1908:

If the South to-day could articulate its chief need, we should hear single shouts:

'More labour!'

Out of this struggle for tenants, servants, and workers has grown the chief complications of the Negro problem.... Indeed, it has seemed to me that the chief difficulty in understanding the Negro problem lies in showing how much of the complication in the South is due to economic readjustments and how much to instinctive race repulsion or race prejudice.

.....  
One of the most significant things I saw in the South - and I saw it everywhere - was the way in which the white people were torn between their feeling of race prejudice and their downright economic needs. Hating and fearing the Negro as a race (though often loving individual Negroes), they yet want him to work for them; they can't get along without him. In one impulse a community will rise to mob Negroes or to drive them out of the country because of Negro crime or Negro vagrancy, or because the Negro is becoming educated, acquiring property and 'getting out of his place'; and in the next impulse laws are passed or other remarkable measures taken to keep him at work - because the South can't get along without him.<sup>9</sup>

Twenty-five years made a real difference in the labor picture.

By 1930 the depression was being felt in North Carolina. Negroes living in the cities were especially hard pressed because with the decrease in available jobs

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<sup>9</sup>Ray Stannard Baker, Following the Color Line (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1964) pp. 78, 79, 81.



whites began taking away the fields of employment which for years had been reserved for blacks. The Governor's "Live at Home" plan was suggested as a solution to the problem. As part of this proposal, Negroes were urged to return to or remain on the farms and try more diversified farming.

Agricultural education was also strongly recommended for them. But, as Edward Byron Reuter pointed out in 1927, those who advocated such were interested in "an education that would make Negroes more efficient laborers without creating discontent with an inferior racial status." He added that Negro education is designed, fundamentally, to make of the Negroes a greater convenience to white men than they are as illiterates."<sup>10</sup>

"Live at home" on the farm was an attractive idea, but not a solution to the problem. Unemployment had reached such proportions in North Carolina by early 1930 that many people were destitute and in danger of starving, and the very worst conditions were found among the Negroes.

1955 found the old order slowly changing in the South - especially the upper South - and conditions were improving for the Negro. However escape from oppression always seems agonizingly slow. There were still only

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<sup>10</sup> Edward Byron Reuter, The American Race Problem (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1970) p. 384.

certain kinds of jobs available for blacks and these were available only in limited numbers. Significant gains were made in one area of employment - professional sports. There were black stars in all three major spectator sports - baseball, basketball, and football - and Negroes were dominating boxing. However, reporting in the News and Observer regarding Lenny Moore and Willie Mays indicated that the idea of the intellectual inferiority of the Negro was still very much alive in 1955. The old order could never be fully changed as long as this idea existed. As Jacques Barzun has said: "As long as people permit themselves to think of human groups without the vivid sense that groups consist of individuals and that individuals display the full range of human differences, ... 'race thinking' will persist."<sup>11</sup>

#### Religion

Booker T. Washington, in his autobiography Up From Slavery, expressed the hope that "the opportunity to freely exercise such political rights will not come in any large degree through outside or artificial forcing, but will be accorded to the Negro by the Southern white people themselves, and that they will protect him in the exercise of

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<sup>11</sup>Barzun, Race, p. ix.

those rights."<sup>12</sup> No doubt Washington based his hope on what he thought to be the Christian character of Southern whites. But the hard truth was, as Kyle Haselden wrote:

...the struggle of the American Negro toward freedom and fullness would have been hard enough with the help of the church but..., in tragic fact, the struggle had to be waged by the Negro often without the concern of the white church and sometimes against its cold and resolute opposition.<sup>13</sup>

White Southerners, in 1905, thought that Christianization of the Negro improved his character and taught him to accept his "place" in the white man's world, but complete segregation was necessary even in the churches because "the negro must learn that there is an insurmountable barrier before the white man which the colored man can never pass." In the North, churches which had fought against slavery and supported radical reconstruction began to follow Southern leadership and institute segregation. Christianization for Negroes meant complete and cheerful acceptance of the subordinate position supposedly required of the black race by God. The white man's religion became another form of Uncle-Tomism to the Negro.

In 1930 white Southern Christians were moving forward only as fast as their patting themselves on the back in praise of the past could move them. More time and

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<sup>12</sup>Booker T. Washington, Up From Slavery (Garden City, N. Y.: The Sun Dial Press, 1937) p. 234.

<sup>13</sup>Kyle Haselden, The Racial Problem in Christian Perspective (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1959) pp. 13,14.

energy was spent in attempting to justify the past than in trying to improve existing conditions or to plan for a better future. But then, it did take considerable thought to enable one to explain how white slave owners were really "the greatest missionaries of modern times."

Yet, long-suffering Negroes, such as Dr. E. C. Peters, still looked to "Christians", pleading for them to "look through the eyes of the Negro at the inequalities which are his lot." The tragedy was, however, that most Southern whites were more interested in and concerned about social customs than about the souls of black folk - white supremacy was more important than the brotherhood of men.

By 1955 the white religious world in North Carolina, and most of the South, was considerably changed. No longer was the church united behind the white supremacists and, more important, youth groups within many churches were speaking out against all forms of racial discrimination. Several large church denominations began steps to bring about integration. Church leaders began to speak of brotherhood and to decry racial "barriers within the church."

Local church congregations were not very quick to follow the advice of denominational leaders, but, as Thomas D. Clark and Albert D. Kirwan point out in their study of the South,

Though a majority of local churches were unrelenting barriers against social change,

they could hardly bar the forces of revolution which operated in the streets before them. Congregations found it increasingly difficult to reconcile the doctrine of brotherhood of man within segregated church bodies. Thus pressure from the larger administrative organizations, and sometimes from local sources, made defense of the status quo difficult.<sup>14</sup>

Despite difficulties, many segregationists were determined that the status quo would be defended and were willing to use force to prevent integration of their churches. In the white church world of the South opinions on integration ran the gamut from "now" to "later" to "never". This lack of unity marked the beginning of the end for segregationists in the realm of religion.

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<sup>14</sup>Clark and Kirwan, The South Since Appomattox, p. 380.



### Conclusion

Self-division, as discussed by Robert Penn Warren in his report on segregation, was a problem for Josephus and Jonathan Daniels; a problem which carried over into the reporting of the News and Observer. There was the division between their own social idealism and their anger at Yankee Phariseeism. (They remembered that in the days when Federal troops supported the reconstruction state governments in the South, not a single Negro held elective office in any Northern state.) There was the division between their Christianity and their social prejudice; between their sense of democracy and their ingrained attitudes toward the Negro. There was the division between their own local views and their concern for the future America would cut in the international picture.<sup>1</sup>

In 1905 the News and Observer was the voice of progressivism in North Carolina, calling for social change throughout the state and the nation. Yet, it dismissed as a foolish mistake the efforts of Albion Tourgee to improve the lot of thousands of Southerners because he happened to be a Northerner and the people he tried to help happened to be Negroes.

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Penn Warren, Segregation: The Inner Conflict in the South (New York: Random House, Inc., 1956) pp. 91-95.

Northern criticism of "southern justice in dealing with the negro" was an especially touchy topic for most Southerners. One News and Observer article contended that the criticism came from "hysterical negrophilistic contemporaries.". Another contended that only Southerners could understand and solve their race problems, and what they needed from the North was patient understanding, not criticism. Yet, the general reporting of the News and Observer clearly shows that a dual system of "justice" existed.

Speaking editorially in 1930 the News and Observer stated: "There is no place in this enlightened day for the punishment of the lash or the sweat box or the muzzle or any of the other atrocities that brutality begets when it is put in complete control of the helpless." Yet, whenever a gross crime was committed by a Negro, against a white, it was likely to be printed in the News and Observer in a lurid way, even though the threat of violence, involving the perpetuator of the crime or innocent victims as the case often was, was certain to be increased by such reporting.

In 1955 the News and Observer supported Governor Hodges' plan calling for voluntary segregation of public schools in North Carolina. The Governor's plan was proposed as a means of avoiding action on the 1954 Supreme Court

desegregation decision, a decision resulting from court action initiated by the Northern based NAACP. Yet, the News and Observer admitted that the dual public school system was unequal and unfair.

In 1905 white churchmen spoke of Christianization as the only solution to the race problem, then shut their church doors to the black people and used the Bible to aid in the defense of their segregated system, declaring that God gave the Negro a subordinate position.

Attitudes changed little during the twenty-five years from 1905 to 1930. In 1930 Southern whites were still more interested in and concerned about social customs than about the souls of black folk - white supremacy was more important than the brotherhood of men.

In 1955 the News and Observer attacked editorially what it called "a new belligerency in intolerance in Mississippi" when a Presbyterian minister's ouster was requested by his congregation after he questioned the legal right of the people to hold a meeting to discuss what should be done about two men accused of advocating racial integration. Yet, no criticism resulted from a seventy-one year old Negro woman being bodily forced from a white Baptist church in North Carolina which the woman had entered in order to inform the pastor that the church's welcome sign near her home had been knocked down.

Southerners prided themselves on their sense of democracy, a sense which was surpassed only by their sense of racial superiority. When the right to vote was taken from the Negroes of North Carolina around the turn of the century, Southern whites explained that it was done for the good of the Negro. It protected Negroes from scheming white politicians who would use the Negro vote for personal gain.

By 1930 the right of Negroes to vote in North Carolina was widely accepted. However, the News and Observer stated editorially that "the Negro belongs in the Republican primary." Attempts by Negroes to vote in the Democratic primary were attacked bitterly. Yet, in reality, political decisions within North Carolina were made in primary elections since the Republican party in the State was powerless.

The South changed in many ways between 1930 and 1955, but in 1955 a chief responsibility of North Carolina politicians was still to protect the traditional customs of the South regarding race relations. The danger of this situation was that few limits were placed on political appeals to racial hysteria.

In 1905 most Southern whites were convinced that the Negro race was a thousand years behind the white race and many were determined to keep them there. By 1955 the Negro was on the verge of attaining complete equality according to the law. Reason had prevailed in the courts. The Negro

race had advanced "a thousand years" in half a century and the world smiled on its advance. However, one great barrier remained, a racial prejudice resulting from nearly three-hundred years of concentrated effort to defend the myth of white supremacy; a racial prejudice of which the News and Observer was itself both victim and promoter.



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